

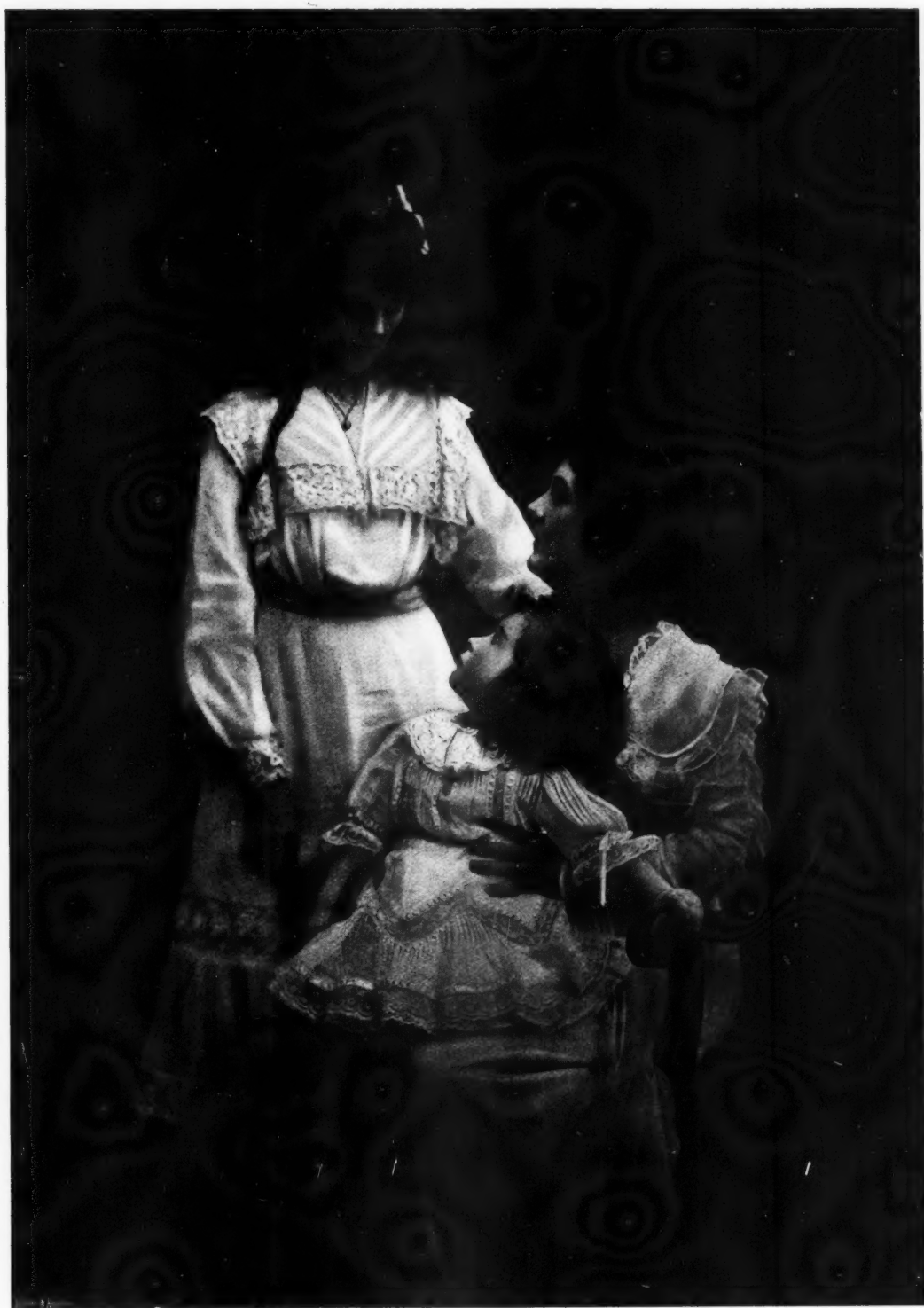
# COUNTRY LIFE

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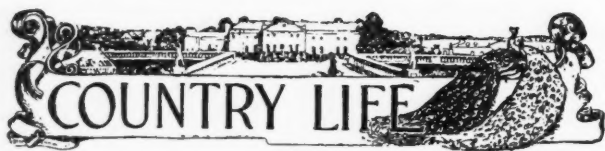
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SPEAIGHT,

THE COUNTESS CAIRNS AND HER DAUGHTERS.

157, New Bond Street, W.



THE Journal for all interested in  
Country Life and Country Pursuits

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EDITORIAL NOTICE.

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A MERRY CHRISTMAS.

OUR first and most pleasant duty to-day is to wish our readers a merry Christmas. The gloomy days of December are falling one by one like leaves from a tree, and when our readers obtain this paper the bells of Yuletide will be ringing. It seems, therefore, a very appropriate moment to cast an eye of reflection over the proceedings of the last twelve months. Even in this busy and crowded age it is a wise and wholesome thing to let the hands lie idle and the head occupy itself not so much with the doings of the present and the schemes of the future, as with that past which is ever fleeting away like waves seen from the deck of a steamer. And if we summon back the months that have fled since our last Christmas greeting, we behold a pageant which, like everything else that is human, is a mixture of good and evil, for if one day brings its sorrows, another generally has a blessing to make up for them. One cannot call the year a very memorable one in English history, and that is perhaps a good sign for the quiet days of peace, though the happiest are generally the most monotonous to look back to, and we have appreciated the prayer, "Give peace in our time, O Lord," all the more keenly because for the greater part of the past year the red banner of war has been flying in the East. It will take a long time before we realise what have been its horrors. All that we know at present is that the armies in the field have been more numerous than any others recorded in history, that sanguinary battles have been fought and untold hardships endured. Out of the din and turmoil of this struggle a new and potent figure has emerged and taken its place amongst the great forces of the world. Henceforth, Japan will have to be reckoned with as she never was before. The counterpart of the picture is that of Russia fallen from her high estate, yet making a bold and desperate attempt to recover position. While the events of war have all been in favour of one side, the final issue is still on the knees of

the gods. The two Powers have been taxed to their utmost, and to some extent it has now become between them a question of endurance; but he would be a rash prophet who pretended to foretell what would have to be said about it twelve months hence.

In the quieter walks of business, literature, and art nothing of supreme importance has happened. The tide of prosperity has to some extent been ebbing, and there has been a considerable amount of stagnancy in commercial affairs; but we would be sorry to imagine that this was anything but temporary. In one of those charts which have been drawn up to illustrate the course of national prosperity it will be found that the periods of depression are more numerous than any other, and we would fain hope that this is only one of them, and that the end of it has well nigh come. In the branch of business which is of particular interest to our readers, namely, agriculture, the year has been one that compares very favourably with its predecessor. We had in 1903 as wet a season as had been known in the annals of husbandry, and the moisture endured till very late in the spring. Hot brilliant weather came about midsummer, and ripened the crops all too swiftly. The yield from them was consequently indifferent, but, on the other hand, prices have ruled fairly high during the whole of the year. The majority of farmers will this year be able to enjoy their Christmas festivities with much less worry about money matters than they have had for a long time back. They thoroughly deserve it; and when the old farmhouse is wreathed in holly and ivy and the mistletoe hangs from the huge oak beam, we trust that old and young will join in the revelry of the day with a spirit of merriment befitting the occasion. In politics times have been comparatively quiet. The fight between the Government and the Opposition has not been more bitter and unrelenting than usual. By mere lapse of time we are approaching closer to a General Election, and, of course, that gives a certain effectiveness and reality to party speeches; but there is no particular reason why Whig and Tory should not sit down at the same Christmas dinner, and in all friendliness wish each other the compliments of the season. The one cloud that has risen in this direction is the problem presented by the unemployed. From provincial towns as well as from the London streets we hear the wailing cry "I've got no work to do." Luckily, a good understanding prevails between those who have and those who have not, and many kindly and considerate schemes are being worked by the former to relieve the latter's distress. It would, perhaps, be mockery to wish the unemployed a merry Christmas, but we hope and trust there are few who will not find some unexpected happiness on that day.

We would fain cast an eye, too, over the art and poetry and letters of the year, but perhaps that would only make the cynic ask, "Where are they?" The glory of Israel has for the moment departed. Her prophets are dead, and no one has yet arisen to sit in their seats. Probably the country never was richer in men and women of accomplishment. The great body of literature is up to a fair average, and the standard of art keeps steadily right, but one looks in vain, either in one direction or the other, for the awakening touch of genius. Perhaps that, too, may be but one of those partial eclipses to which a nation is subject. After all, a long period elapsed between the death of Chaucer and the flowering of the Elizabethans. It yielded no writer of the very highest rank. So, again, from the decay of the Shakespearian school of dramatists to the time of Cromwell, which gave us Milton, there was no pre-eminent writer. It is true that the eighteenth century was strewn with men whose equal we may never see again, Fielding and Sterne and Swift and so on up to the time of Jane Austen and Walter Scott; but here, too, we come to a cleavage. Probably we are still too close to Dickens and Thackeray and George Eliot to afford them their true places, but we doubt if it is among the highest. Since Tennyson and William Morris and Browning and Matthew Arnold departed, Mr. Swinburne is the only member of the group left alive. There are many delightful minor poets, but it would be flattery to put them beside those "whose distant footsteps echo down the corridors of time." So the year has not been very memorable for its intellectual productions, which have been greater in quantity than in quality. Where we do make progress is in science, and here there have been many interesting discoveries, and many more are looming into view as we once more wish, to use an old-fashioned phrase, the kind and courteous reader a very Merry Christmas and the happiest of New Years.

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Countess Cairns with her two daughters, Lady Rosemary Cairns, and Miss Lavender Sloane Stanley. The Countess Cairns is the daughter of Alexander Augustus Berens, Esq., and was married first to the second Earl Cairns in 1887, and afterwards to Roger Cyril Hans Sloane Stanley, Esq., of Paultons, Romsey, Hants.



WHATEVER may be the result of the terrible conflict between Russia and Japan, the Western world will have learned that in Japan there lives a race of heroes. Sheer, blind, animal pluck is a quality common to most men, but the cool, calm, and calculating manner in which the Japanese, their naval officers in particular, face the most appalling dangers, has won for them an imperishable wreath of laurels. In the recent torpedo attack, Commander Yezoe's boats were under repair when the order reached him; however, he managed to get one of them into sea-going order, and steamed off to the appointed rendezvous, only to find that he was too late. Going on alone, he drove his frail craft through terrible seas and a blinding snowstorm, located the object of the attack, and in spite of the storm of shot and shell let loose upon him, steamed on until he could actually hear the voices of the hostile crew, and launched his torpedoes with deadly effect. Commander Yezoe himself was killed and his boat disabled, but through all the surrounding dangers, comrades came to the rescue and succeeded in towing out the damaged craft. Well may Admiral Togo say, that the "skill in manœuvring and the bravery displayed by our officers and men, inspire me with a deep feeling of satisfaction and confidence."

It is one noticeable feature of the unrest in Russia, that while the party of reform in Russia proper is agitating for measures of progress which are new to Russia altogether, the Finns and the Poles have asked for no more than the degree of liberty and self-government which was theirs till very lately, and is actually enjoyed at the present time by the inhabitants of the strictly Russian provinces. The Poles have addressed to the Minister of the Interior a copy of resolutions passed at a prominent national meeting, pleading for the recognition of the Polish nationality and language, and for the concession of the Zemstvo system as now established in Russia. The members of the Finnish Diet have signed a petition presented to the Presidents of its four estates, proposing that measures shall be brought forward for the re-establishment of constitutional forms of administration, a proceeding which amounts, of course, to an attempt to vindicate the national rights guaranteed by a series of Russian Czars, but totally overridden by the tyrannical policy of the last five or six years. It remains to be seen whether the party of reaction will prevail with regard to the questions of Poland and Finland, as well as on most of the other important points which have been raised, or whether the pressure will at least be eased in these quarters by a relaxation of their special disabilities.

One of the possibilities, if indeed it should not be regarded as a distinct probability, that we have to face as a result of the victorious issue of our allies, the Japanese, from the present disastrous war is a demand for the revision of laws now in existence for their exclusion from some of our Colonies. If the Japanese content themselves with the simple demand for the repeal of the prohibition as regards members of their own nation, it is not unlikely that a mode of solution may be found. If, on the other hand, they shall, as it has been hinted that they may do, require a like freedom of entry for the entire yellow race, the question is certain to assume a very critical aspect, for some of the Colonies are as strongly opposed to admitting Chinamen as the Japanese are naturally determined to do all in their power to remove disabilities, which are at once humiliating to their self-respect and detrimental to their commercial development. It is a prospect that may well give us reason for serious reflection.

The greatest satisfaction and relief will be felt in the country at the official announcement that the new quick-firing field-guns are already ordered for the Army. A sum of £2,500,000 will be granted for this purpose. What is even more satisfactory is the unanimous opinion of critics who ought to know that we shall have the very best quick-firing gun hitherto designed. The weight of the shell will be 18½ lb., and the gun will return after every shot to the exact position from which it was aimed. In other words, one "bulls-

eye" is followed mechanically by as many more hits on the same spot as there are cartridges inserted. It must be remembered that the large sum allocated (which is, after all, not more than the cost of two first-class ironclads and a cruiser) will have to pay not only for the guns, but also for the greatly increased number of ammunition waggons which must accompany them into action.

It is probable that as the result of a conference to be held very shortly in Ottawa, the North-West Territory of Canada will at length attain to the full rights of a Province of the Dominion. If this is so, the last step will have been reached in a process of change in the status of this great region, which began when, in 1869, the Dominion Government bought out the Hudson Bay Company for a sum of £300,000. The first North-West Rebellion broke out under Louis Riel, as a result of the mistrust felt by the half-breed retainers of the company for the new administration under a Lieutenant-Governor, and the second outbreak of 1885, which ended with Riel's execution, is still fresh in contemporary memory. The Territories have progressed towards full and equal rights by gradual stages, and, concurrently with the great recent development of this region, the desire for autonomy in the Dominion has become very strong in the last half-dozen years. Mr. Haultain, the Premier of the North-West Territories, will confer with the Dominion Government early in January, and it is hoped that an agreement may be reached in good time to allow of a Bill for the constitution of the new Province being brought in next session. Ultimately, if not immediately, two Provinces are likely to be cut out of the North-West, with its vast area and swift growth of immigrant population.

If Hetty meant just "Yes," and "No,"  
Jack gave his reasons plain and true,  
Then life would lose quite half its thorns,  
And nearly half its roses, too.

If you could see your Mary's heart,  
And she your mind like crystal clear,  
This world would be a simpler place—  
And, oh! so very dull, my dear. K. M. G.

It is worthy of note that nearly all the new Vagabonds whose names were reported in the papers as being present at the dinner given to Mr. Hall Caine the other night had titles to their names. Among the guests were Lady Dorothy Nevill, Sir Arthur and Lady Trendell, Lady Fremantle, so that the Bohemianism they represented may fairly be described as genteel. The spokesman of the party, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, probably did not expect that his eulogism of the guest of the night would be taken seriously, and, indeed, the mind of man refuses to do so. A comparison between Mr. Hall Caine and Mr. George Meredith is as grotesque as the statement that in the novels of Mr. Hall Caine there is a well of English undefiled. In fact, the reader of only ordinary intelligence cannot do more than read with open-mouthed amazement the speech of the chairman, and the not less radiantly infelicitous reply of the guest of the evening.

Mr. John Morley is always worth listening to when he talks about books, and his speech at the opening of the Plumstead Public Library was exceptionally interesting, particularly in regard to what he said about poetry. He laid it down that there should be preferences, but no exclusions, which, if we mistake not, was originally the opinion of Voltaire. There are people who almost make a boast of not being able to appreciate poetry, and some of them seem actually delighted that they cannot read many of the classics of the English tongue. Now, it is good for any man or woman to be absolutely honest, and never pretend a liking which they do not feel; but, on the other hand, the wider the sympathy and appreciation of the individual, the fuller and richer will be his or her life, and those are to be pitied who have not discovered what consolation and comfort there is to be found in fine poetry, which really is the cream of good literature.

The manner in which Christmas festivities are kept up is curiously exemplified by the return from Covent Garden, which shows that very nearly 100,000 Christmas trees have been sold this season. Probably of all the ancient observances connected with Christmas, that of the Christmas-tree retains its place most firmly in public favour, though along with it we must remember the quantities of holly and mistletoe that have been sold. Holly, by the by, is this year in very fine condition, and covered with red berries, while mistletoe has been a crop below the average. Probably there are few who remember the origin of this plan of decorating the house with evergreens at Christmas. It is, like almost every other old custom, a relic of Paganism, and comes from the period when, at the winter solstice, it was deemed necessary to propitiate the sylvan deities.



The annual poultry fair, which opens a few days before Christmas, is not only an extraordinary sight in itself, but it is an exhibition which should be visited by all those dwellers in the country who may be even indirectly interested in the question of the rearing of poultry and preparing them for market. The enormous quantities of poultry of all descriptions which pour into the London markets show what scope there is for the development of poultry-farming in this country, and in spite of the practical lessons and teaching of the Poulterers' Company, it is in many cases only too evident that our poultry-rearers have not yet recognised the paramount importance of arranging their birds in such a manner that they may arrive at the market looking presentable in appearance.

The wolf that got loose in Northumberland is making some amends for its destruction of sheep, by providing a unique Christmas entertainment for the sporting country people of the far North land. The Master of the Hayden Hounds has had his pack out several times after it, but although he gives them a good run the hounds are not his equal in speed. A curious fact is that the other day, when they were after him, a fox got into his company, and the two ran together for a considerable time. In our "Correspondence" column will be found a letter describing a similar experience in France. It will be interesting to note how long it takes to overcome this animal. We hope that in the interests of good sport he will have as much law as a fox, that no firearm or poison will be used, but a fair endeavour be made to kill him in the open with hounds.

Nobody grudged the £250 which the London County Council voted three years ago towards an enquiry into the origin, and indirectly into the prevention, of that typically metropolitan product—fog. But the Blue Book that has just been issued shows that the £250 have evaporated into thin air, leaving us very much where we were as regards our knowledge of this particular yellow peril. The enquiry brings out two points—(1) that fogs and frost frequently go hand in hand, and a mild winter is often immune from serious fogs; (2) that fogs are not formed outside our area, but that we make our own, so to speak. As to the first point, we cannot unfortunately regulate the temperature of either the air or the river, and as to the second, there is little consolation in it. The investigators distinguish between natural fogs and what they call smoke fogs, and, whilst the former must still, apparently, be labelled as one of London's incurable complaints, the remedy for the latter is obviously outside the province of the meteorologist. One would think that by legislative measures it would be possible to diminish the amount of carbon floating in our midst.

In some shape or other, however quiescent they may seem to be, the forces of Nature are always at work; and there are times when even the vast and dreary wastes of peat and moss which exist in Ireland awake, and then it is said that the bog is "walking." Nothing can arrest its movement, which is just as deadly in its effect as the hurtling crash of an avalanche. Only a day or two ago, the bog in the neighbourhood of the little village of Cloonshiever began to "walk," in a fashion so remorseless and so slow that it took nearly three days to traverse about three-quarters of a mile; but its deadly work is done, and the little village is practically overwhelmed. Fortunately on this occasion no lives were lost, and the inhabitants had plenty of time to remove their household goods and belongings. These bog slides are very curious phenomena, and are probably due to the tremendous weight of water accumulated in the bog. Some of these bogs are notorious for their bad habit of "walking," and it is not many years since this same bog swept over and destroyed a large tract of fertile land.

It is to be hoped that whenever we do get a laboratory of "morbid bacteriology" started, to investigate the diseases of animals, including grouse, chickens, pheasants and partridges, hares and rabbits, among all of which disease rages unchecked, and absolutely outside any but conjectural treatment, the diseases of fresh-water fish and crustacea will also be studied. Fancy, if such a picture is not too disturbing, what would be the effect on English sport if all the trout in our rivers were attacked by a deadly epidemic such as that which destroyed the crayfish, and as to the nature of which there seems to be complete ignorance? With the increase of artificial stocking of streams such a catastrophe is not impossible. Epidemics among fishes in the sea seem to be quite unknown. It may be that salt water is a great purifier. If the sea crustacea, such as the lobsters and crabs, were attacked by a plague such as that which killed off the river lobsters, the world would be a great deal poorer.

The reappearance of crayfish not only in the Thames Valley, but also in the rivers of Belgium, is noted by various

correspondents in some of our contemporaries, while others have borne testimony to the completeness of the destruction caused by the epidemic both here and abroad. Not only the Belgian streams and ponds, but also those of the Moselle Valley, lost nearly all their stock. On the Continent there are two kinds, the small crayfish of the English rivers, and a larger one, called in Germany the "Edel-Krebs," or "noble" crayfish. The latter is the best for food, and the one artificially cultivated. During all the time of the epidemic, the only water-system of the Thames Valley which escaped was the Upper Lea, and the "New River," which is partly drawn from the Lea, and partly from the Chadwell spring. There the crayfish survived until last year, that is, they escaped the epidemic for eleven years. Yet only two months ago it was discovered that this insidious and deadly disease had broken out on the Upper Lea. No one seems to know anything about the history or pathology of the malady.

#### THE SHEPHERD'S SONG.

The pilgrim wind drifts sobbing by,  
And flings pale clouds across the sky;  
The great downs lie beneath the stars,  
Like sleeping monsters—the white scars  
Of pit and quarry break the green  
Where my sheep wander lone unseen.  
Grey phantom shapes that softly pass  
Across the short sweet dew-drenched grass,  
The only sounds a smothered bleat  
The heavy tread of their small feet.

Far on the swelling wolds above  
A red light burns where dwells my love,  
Pricking the darkness like a star,  
A beacon light that shows afar,  
And watches as my guard I keep  
Over the white flock of my sheep.

Mine are the joys of field and fold,  
The rush of rain across the wold,  
The wild wind, and the wet earth's scent  
The golden fray where skies are rent;  
The lapwing's swift encircling flight,  
The mists that gather silver white.

Simple my work, humble and small,  
Yet dreams come to me—I recall  
That long ago on such a night,  
A radiant mystic heavenly light,  
Lit all the wonderful wide sky,  
To rough poor men ill-clad as I,  
Who watched their sheep and tended well  
A sound of angels' singing fell,  
And bore glad tidings even to them—  
The birth of Christ in Bethlehem!

ISABEL CLARKE.

Those whose words are entitled to respect aver that the problem of the unemployed is now, or, at any rate, is likely to be ere this winter is past, acuter than it has ever been before. If this is true, then it is evident that the means for grappling with the difficulty have been much extended and improved since last Christmas; for processions of the unemployed—able-bodied fellows, with drums beating and flags flying—are few and far between. Recognised funds are not languishing, and we fancy the public has at last come to see that organised charity is better than indiscriminate almsgiving. In particular, people have begun to distrust those unsightly and disagreeable processions we have referred to; and, for our part, we almost believe the story of the lady who, having given her gardener a day's leave to go up to town, accidentally noticed him marching along beneath a mottoed banner, an occupation which, as he confessed, he found more profitable than gardening.

It is satisfactory to find a note of decided optimism in Lord Onslow's address to the Agricultural Conference at Welshpool, in regard to the prospect of exterminating sheep scab by the aid of some new regulations of the Board of which he is President. And it is the more satisfactory, because the regulations are not of an extremely drastic character, and appear to have taken into fully adequate consideration the difficulties attendant on any generally compulsory dipping of sheep. A chief obstacle to the enforcement of a general dipping regulation is that it would restrict the movements of sheep so much; and where the numbers run up to something like 25,000,000, as in the case of our sheep population, it is not to be done without difficulty. But it is proposed to give local authorities a larger power of restricting the movements of sheep, and of separating all flocks that have been in contact with diseased sheep until they have been dipped, and, further, of insisting on the dipping of sheep brought from a distance. There will be arrangements for the definition of certain areas in which scab may prevail, and power given of enforcing precautions in case of all sheep within those areas or coming from them.



## IN THE CHURCH PORCH.

ON a stone in Melrose Abbey there is an inscription to the memory of the man "wha built this haly kirk," and no higher compliment could be paid to Mr. Evans, who took the photographs which we reproduce to-day, than to say, which is the exact truth, that the study of them made that phrase, "this haly kirk," return and return again to the mind. They seem to bring

would lay bare the truth about what is meant by sincerity in art. Our architects of the present day are probably more learned than any that went before them. They, at any rate, come at the end of long generations whose lore is at their disposal. The principles of taste and beauty have been ground into them, and yet it is safe to say that no cathedral in our time could be, or ever will be, built to equal those of the past; and the only



Fredk. H. Evans.

WELLS CATHEDRAL: STAIRWAY TO THE CHAPTER-HOUSE.

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to us, even as the buildings themselves do, a breath from that great time in English history when our forefathers believed most implicitly in the Christian religion and built those noble fanes, which still remain an equal testimony to their skill, their taste, and their piety. It would lead us into a long speculation if we were to enquire why it is that the church-builders of to-day fail so miserably where their predecessors succeeded beyond what could have been dreamt of. It seems to us that the enquiry

explanation we can find is the lack of conviction. We do not mean to assert that belief has departed from the world, only it has grown wide and thin, and has not the definition which our forefathers gave it. Our point might be made clear by a simple reference to the production of grotesques. In mediæval figures of this kind, meant to represent devils, demons, or evil spirits, there is an air of authenticity which the modern artist cannot impart. The reason for the difference seems to be

simple. The artist of old time not only believed himself that the air was thick with invisible spirits, things of good import, things of evil import, but he had the consciousness that those who saw his work believed even more firmly than he did himself; and by what mysterious means the sympathy of an audience re-acts upon the artist it is difficult to say, though the fact has been demonstrated time and again. Now the modern man has lost that belief. Perhaps the only eminent artist who retained it up to modern times was William Blake, and of him the opinion of his contemporaries was largely that of Carlyle, "the mad little soul of Blake." But supposing that he was insane, the insanity was that of genius. Someone has said that he succeeded because he drew with his pencil the figures which his imagination beheld as he sat gazing dreamily into the firelight. No doubt that might have been so, but then the explanation does not tell us how his imagination came to be peopled with such strange inhabitants. His Uriel, his saints and angels, his prophets, and the other figures of his pictures, must have been realised to himself in the realm of fancy before he could embody them in paint. So if we take the gargoyles of a church we may see how the mediæval sculptor arrived at them, and how the modern could not. The earlier of the two believed implicitly in the demons to which he tried to give form and outline. It was comparatively easy for him, therefore, to show by his parable in the stone that at the touch of the consecrating holy

water all evil things fled from the kirk, which was henceforth to be holy and devoted to one purpose. But to our modern mind much of this has become nothing more nor less than what the classical mythology is. We recognise to-day as fully as the ancients themselves, how exquisitely beautiful are some of the deities worshipped by Homer and his contemporaries—grey-eyed Athene, Apollo, Jupiter, Juno. Still in Olympus we seem to see them reclining and bathed in the immortal light with which the imagination of poet and painter and sculptor has clothed them. But they have long ceased to be real. In the ages when they were worshipped and believed in, they were only glorified reflections of themselves that men, so to speak, flung up to the sky and then adored. Their qualities are never really superhuman. The loveliness of Aphrodite, the allurements of Circe, are those of the fair women of the time; while even the errands of the great gods are those only of frail and fickle mortals. Ever do we seem to see in "the god pursuing the maiden hid" the tale of man and woman as it has been told and retold since the emergence of man from the brute. Then endeavour brought despair in its wake, and man, saddened by his experience, first superseded these ancient deities with a just and terrible God who was the Lord of Hosts and the Vindicator of Right. But later, renewed pain and unending grief made him substitute for this a God of suffering, one who had been man himself and drunk the bitterness of manhood to its last dregs. Him we still worship,

but it would be idle to say with that devoted, intense, and passionate zeal which characterised the earlier disciples. Science and thought and research have been continually widening the outlook, and perhaps in a sense reducing the significance of mankind. It does not seem credible that all those millions of worlds, suns, stars, satellites, which make up the Universe should be set in motion and kept in their course merely for the sake of that "forked radish with walking powers" which a great philosopher defined man to be. And, again, we have followed him in his history from earliest times; seen how institutions and laws, observances and customs were framed and grew to their present dimensions. Science has disclosed to us ever new and greater wonders in heaven and earth. In one way it has not sapped our faith, because the more we learn the more incredible does it seem that there should be no purpose and no object in it all. Rather are we strengthened in the belief of the best thinkers of the last generation that there is a "stream of tendency making for righteousness"; that "through the ages one increasing purpose runs, And the thoughts of men are ripened with the process of the suns"; that, in a word, this gigantic machinery has not been set in motion and kept going without a purpose. But the men of strongest and clearest faith of the day are the least likely to accept the superstitions of the past. They no longer give credit to the tales of gnomes and fairies that used to be accepted so implicitly, and they regard them much in the same way as they do, for example, the stories told by Ovid in the "Metamorphoses." Carlyle used to insist upon the interpretation of imagination as being the bodying forth of what was within—that is to say, in the words of a still greater than Carlyle, it "gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name." Put in the language



Fredk. H. Evans. ELY CATHEDRAL: DOOR IN THE SOUTH CHOIR.

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of plain prose and common-sense, imagination gives concrete expression to what previously existed as an idea; but, if we have no real or direct ideas about the grotesque, if we have only certain thoughts derived at second or third hand from those who had them originally, then it is certain that the artistic expression of these derived ideas is sure to be feebler than the expression of those who had them, so to speak, direct. Hence it is that the modern artist fails so consistently to give an air of authenticity to his pictures of the grotesque. And the same line of argument being extended would eventually embrace the whole of the work done on cathedrals. As contradicting the theory that their beauty was an effect of the inspiration due to religious conviction, it has been pointed out that, as a matter of fact, the great majority of the mediæval workmen were practically slaves and certainly barbarians; so that it is in the highest degree improbable that they could have brought to their work anything more than the spirit of "mechanic drudges." We may admit that without hurting our argument in the slightest. It must have been the designers and overseers to whom the perfection was due, not to the mere toilers, who, following the fashion of their time, would work well if looked thoroughly after, but would shirk and dodge if they had a chance of doing so. But in that same Melrose to which we have already referred, there is the most exquisite carving in parts of walls that could be by no chance visible to the human eye; and here you have the conscientious work which comes from the knowledge and belief that to the eye of God one part of a house is just as visible as another. Thus our meditations bring us back to the consideration that the building of churches in our time is no longer feasible. It is something that we can understand how it was done before, and, probably, Christmas helps us more than any other day of the year to do this, for it brings back memories of a time when belief had no doubts and no after-thoughts, when the childish imagination figured an actual Santa Claus coming down the chimney laden with gifts, and when the carols and songs of Christmastide, the "Good King Wenceslas looked out at the feast of Stephen," sung in childish treble outside the window, the "Hark, the Herald Angels sing," sung by the choir, the universal greetings of peace and goodwill, were all to the undoubting young mind direct news from a distant but sunny land, whose existence was unquestionable. Kneeling at the same shrine in maturer years, we recall with a pensiveness allied to melancholy, and not foreign to regret, the youthful thoughts, dreams, and resolutions, all of which were founded on that implicit belief; but it could not exist for ever in its first genuine fervour. The winds of controversy blow on the young mind whether it wishes it or not. If we reduce Goethe's expression, the "Zeit-Geist," to sober, and, as far as we can make it, accurate language, it seems to come to the same thing as Nathaniel Hawthorne's curious word that every poet is only the journalist of a more or less extended time. No man can altogether separate himself from the age in which he lives; its thoughts, ideas, speculations will be borne to him as though on the wings of birds. It is said that the rabbit lying close



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within his burrow can hear every noise, because his hole in the earth is to him as it were a magnified ear-trumpet, collecting the voices and signals that are going about. So in like manner the very recluse will receive, consciously or unconsciously, something of the spirit of the age in which he lives. It will float to him by means he did not dream of, and establish a kinship with his contemporaries. We have proof enough of that in the world of art, more in architecture perhaps than in any other branch, for the builders of a period, if they did not follow the same model, at least approached it. Take a Tudor house, an Elizabethan house, a Queen Anne house, a Georgian house, a Victorian house, and however much the builders and architects might differ in temperament and ability, it will be seen that a general character runs through the work of all the different men. And in literature, schools might almost be designated by the time in which they existed. For example, take the dramatists of the Elizabethan period, the prose writers of the eighteenth century, or the poets of the nineteenth century, and it will be found that in each group the Zeit-Geist has, so to speak, touched their lips with his wand, and they speak the same language. In painting it would be easy



to establish the same truth, though for our present purpose a reference to the portrait painters of the eighteenth century, Sir Joshua and Gainsborough, Lawrence and Romney, will suffice. Individual as is the work of each, there is still the common factor added by the spirit of the age. It becomes then imperative to ask what is the spirit of the age in which we live? The answer that comes most readily is the word scientific. The latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century will ever be memorable for discoveries in science and for the accumulation, methodising, sifting, and testing of knowledge. It has been a most critical time. Things that were taken on trust for centuries have been subjected to rigid examination, and even history itself has been half stripped of its romance and, as it were, put in the witness-box and compelled to prove its identity by documentary or other evidence. No doubt this is a commendable characteristic, but, at the same time, it is not one that makes for great enthusiasms or great achievements in the realm of imagination. We cannot boast, as they did in the spacious days of Queen Elizabeth, that England is a nest of singing birds. The highest poetry is not being produced at this moment, nor can it be said that the poetic nature has found refuge in other directions, as, for example, the novel, since no great work of fiction has been produced since the death of George Eliot. In drama it is the same, and in architecture it must be so likewise. Much of the most beautiful building of to-day is a mere reproduction or copying of what is old. Originality in design there is none, and certainly, as far as churches are concerned, no sign has been given that the art survives.

The difficulty is not that of erecting a handsome and durable building. Much of the work of the present day promises to be as lasting, as it certainly is as fine, as was done at any time in history. If a theatre were to be built, there are several architects who could draw up exquisite plans for it, and we have standing examples of the success they are capable of achieving. Our banks and other places of business, many of our halls and public buildings,



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are all that could be desired; but the crowning beauty of the buildings that we illustrate to-day is that they are emphatically places to worship in. Those who are technically learned may delight in the design and ornament, the arch, pillar, and stairway; but, after all, these are but the details, the means by which an end is reached, and that end was to produce such a structure as by its atmosphere would naturally induce a devout frame of mind, the feeling expressed by the words "take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The most reverential of us at the present moment are largely in the position of the imaginary man in the little poem which Thackeray worked into "Pendennis." Like him, we would bid the believer "kneel undisturbed, fair saint," but like him, too, though we hear the minster-bell toll out, though we see the congregation arriving, we do not enter there, but only linger a minute at the church porch. It is no exaggeration on the part of the lover of Nature to say that the most sincere worship offered to-day is in that cathedral whose dome is the "lift sea blue," whose organ is the chanting wind, and whose choristers are the wild winged things of the field. And yet, perhaps, one is inclined at all times to write with too much dogmatism on such a subject, in which positive statement is altogether out of place. It is but at the best a curious speculation in regard to the changes that have come over the thoughts and dreams of men.

It has always seemed to us that there is a great deal of pathos in the confession made by Dr. Wendell Holmes that he grew more materialistic as he grew older. We find this to have been the case with

many who have lived most strenuously and thought most deeply, as if their idealism and spiritualism, their flights of fancy and shows of imagination, were due only to the over-abundant vigour and energy of youth, and that, as strength declines, the "vision and faculty divine" fades away also. It did, at any rate, in the case of him who penned that immortal phrase. And in that mood the only thing to do is to recur to the message that Goethe sent to the world, and that Carlyle harped on to the end of his life, "We bid you to hope." After all, there have

been periods before in the history of the world when a great turning point was reached, and religious systems were turned into a laughing-stock. Greece became atheistical at one period of her career, and Rome might have endured unto this day but for the fact that corruption entered into her priesthood and cynical unbelief into the minds of her patricians. Out of the waste and confusion, there will probably arise a new heaven and a new earth. We have not yet had time to assimilate thoroughly the discoveries and thoughts of the last century. We are still in the destructive stage, but it is only in the way of clearing the ground for a new structure; and when new enthusiasms are born, or old enthusiasms reawaken, art will regain that absolute sincerity of conviction without which we know of no great thing that has been achieved in the history of the world.

## FROM THE FARMS.

### EGGS IN WINTER.

**I**N spite of all that has been written and thought on this subject, it is a melancholy fact that London eggs in the months of December, January, and February are far from being trustworthy. Let them be obtained even from the best stores in town, and a considerable percentage will prove to be anything but fresh. To remedy this state of affairs, Mr. H. de Courcy writes a very sensible article in the new number of the Journal of the Board of Agriculture. He lays down six conditions which must be complied with before a good supply of eggs in winter can be obtained. They are as follows: "(1) A good winter-laying breed must be kept; (2) the hens must be of a highly-productive strain, and bred, if possible, from several generations of good winter layers; (3) the pullets which are to be kept for winter layers must be hatched neither too early nor too late; (4) the hens must not be more than two years old; (5) the houses, yards, and other appliances must be so laid out and constructed as to ensure comfort; and (6) the food must contain a sufficiently large proportion of those elements which are necessary not only for the formation of eggs, but also to repair waste tissue, and to generate the heat of which the cold season tends to deprive the body." In regard to breed, he says, very truly, that

strain is of more importance than breed itself. Thus a Plymouth Rock, a Wyandotte, an Orpington, a Faverolle, a Langshan, may, under favourable conditions, give eggs in winter, but the main thing is to obtain a pullet from a hen that has been accustomed to lay in winter, and whose mother has possessed the same habit. Select your layers, is the golden rule here. As Professor Gowell says, it is known that the laws of inheritance and transmission are as true with birds as with cattle, sheep, and horses. The hens for winter laying ought to be between six and eighteen months old. Great attention should be paid to their housing and feeding, because it is essential that if a hen is to lay in winter she should be comfortable.

### MILK TESTS FOR FARMERS.

The Board of Agriculture has performed a useful piece of service by inducing most of the agricultural colleges in England to determine for a small fee, usually 6d., the fat contents of milk for local farmers. This information is absolutely necessary to those who would establish and build up a good dairy herd, since it enables them to watch closely the seasonal and other fluctuations in the quality of their milk. It is also a check on each cow. Analysis at regular periods will enable the owner of the herd to know which animals should be got rid of, and which are worth preserving and breeding from. There is nothing really more thoroughly uneconomical than the practice, which prevails more generally than would be believed, of simply buying dairy cows at market, milking them for a period, and then despatching them to the butcher. To build up a really good milking herd it is necessary to measure and watch the produce of the cows most carefully, and to select for breeding purposes only such as are good themselves and have come from a good stock. The ideal pedigree is one which contains nothing bad to cast back to.

### THE IMPROVEMENT OF HUNTERS.

The report to the Council of the Hunters' Improvement Society, made by the special committee appointed to investigate the subject of the breeding of hunters, is a very valuable document. The commission began by issuing a number of questions to the Royal Commissioners on Horse-breeding, the members of the Council, Masters of Hounds, Secretaries of Hunts,



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Secretaries of Horse Shows, and Veterinary Surgeons. The evidence thus collected goes to show, that while thorough-breds, Shires, and polo ponies are bred on more or less scientific principles, the production of light horses is more random. There is, however, a desire in certain favourable localities to obtain suitable brood mares, but the committee report that "the country has been, and is being, drained to a large extent of its best mares by purchases from abroad." In 1904, for example, the Dutch Government took 350 of the very best young Irish mares. On the other hand, it costs us about £2,000,000 a year paid to the foreigner for horses which we do not seem able to obtain in any other way. The proposal of the committee is, that a district should be taken as a model, which they might take in hand. They would supply lists of the best sires, pedigrees of mares, etc., and generally develop the district in accordance with its requirements. It is, however, very questionable how far this is a matter of interest to the English farmer, since the breeding of hunters is in a general way out of his beat. For one thing, comparatively few farmers in these days can afford to hunt. The profits of agriculture are so small that the business requires far closer attention than it did before, and the possession of a good thoroughbred mare would be in some sort a temptation, and none the less so because to appear in the field with her would always have as an excuse that it was a fair means of effecting a purpose.

## IN THE GARDEN.

### THE CHIMNEY BELLFLOWER.

A VERY interesting reference to this beautiful flower occurs in "Some English Gardens," and the writer, Miss Jekyll, tells us of its value in the border and wall: "In good soils in our Southern counties the tall and beautiful Chimney Bellflower (*Campanula pyramidalis*), commonly grown in pots for the conservatory, should be largely used in the borders; it also loves a place in a wall joint. It is a plant that we are so used to see in a pot that we are apt to forget its great merit in the open ground. At Berkeley Castle *Campanula pyramidalis* has been sown in the inner side of the low parapet of the lower terrace, and handsomely they have grown, supported only by the slight nutriment they could find among the stones. But, like so many of the Bellflowers, it delights in growing between the stones of a wall. It should be remembered how well this fine plant will succeed in such a place, as well as for general garden use. It is so commonly grown as a pot plant for autumn indoor decoration that its other uses would seem to be generally overlooked."

### THE MOST BEAUTIFUL CLEMATISES.

A correspondent desires to know the names of the most beautiful varieties of Clematis, but not the species. As the answer may be interesting to others who are planting climbers now, we give it in these notes. The Clematises are divided into several groups, known as the Jackmani, Florida, Lanuginosa, and Patens. The first named contains the familiar Clematis Jackmani, which clouds over with purple many a garden arch, and in addition to this there are Jackmani alba, which from our experience is not a true white, and less free-flowering than the type, Mme. Grange, reddish violet, and Star of India, a deep plum

colour, and petals having a bar down the centre. The Florida section flowers during summer, and the flowers are more or less double; the most notable forms are Countess of Lovelace, lilac, Duchess of Edinburgh, white, John Gould Veitch, lavender, and Lucie Lemoine, white. The Lanuginosa group contains several very handsome varieties, especially worthy of mention being Candida, grey white, Blue Gem, a soft shade of blue, Lady Caroline Neville, French white, with a bar of deeper colour down the centre of the petal, Princess of Wales, mauve, Beauty of Worcester, violet, and *Purpurea elegans*, rich purple. Of the Patens section choose Lady Londesborough, greyish silver in colour, with a bar of delicate shade, Lord Londesborough, lilac and red bar, Sir Garnet Wolseley, bluish red, with bar of deeper colouring, Edith Jackman, white, with a touch of mauve, and Marcel Moser, lilac and silver, and deep purple bar. The many beautiful hybrids should not be forgotten. These are the outcome of crossing Clematis coccinea with other varieties. The best of these hybrids are Countess of Onslow, Duchess of York, and Sir Trevor Lawrence.

### RANDOM NOTES.

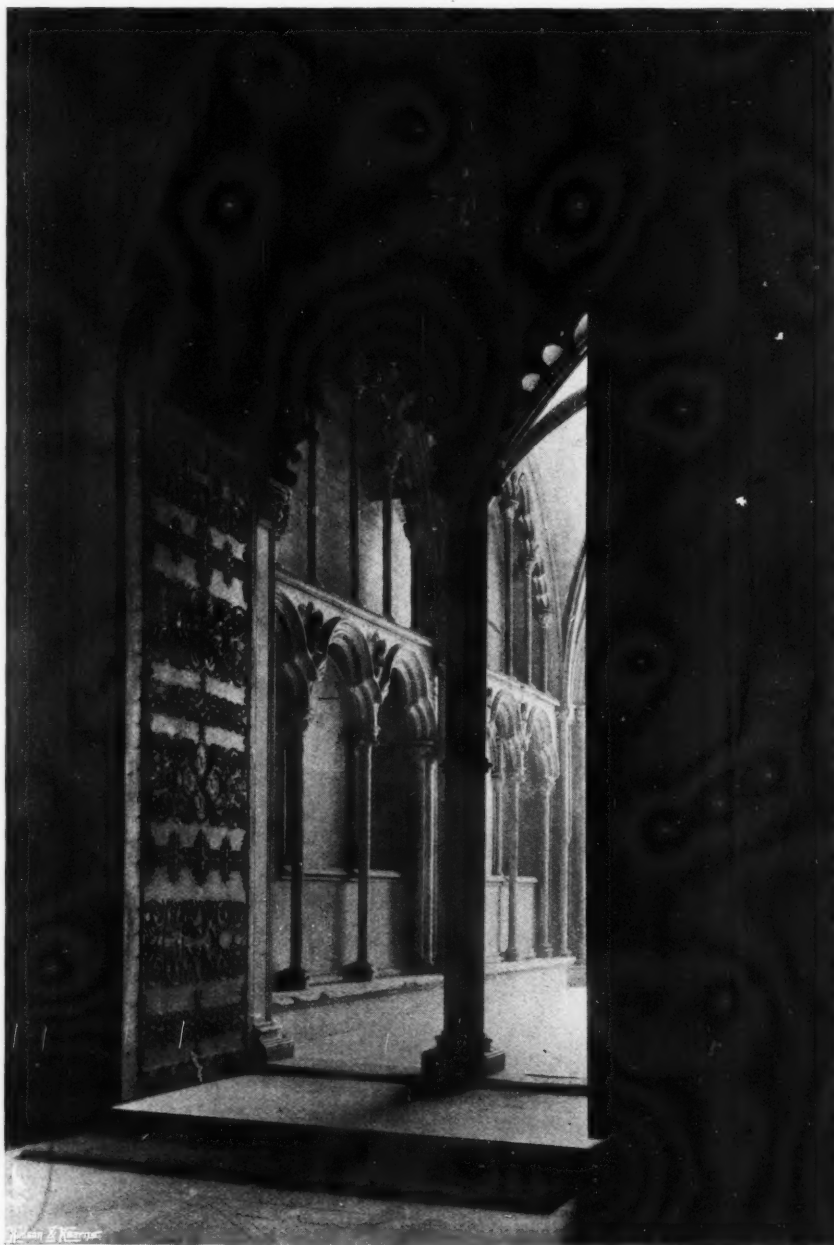
*Sweet Violets.*—The breath of Sweet Violets in winter is as sweet as the fragrance from the little blue flowers nestling in wayside banks on a warm spring morn, and the hardness of the wilding should make growers of the large varieties under glass think. How often does one see the frames of Violets kept constantly shut, as if harbouring some exotic, whereas the opposite conditions should prevail. Violets are not tender; all they require is protection against damp, and when the weather is mild throw off the lights altogether.

*An Interesting New Tree.*—During the past few years the well-known firm of Messrs. Veitch and Sons have been, through their collector, Mr. E. H. Wilson, searching the wonderful country of Western China for new species of plants. Several of them have been shown before the Royal Horticultural Society and received well-merited awards. One of them is *Davidia involucreata*, of which Messrs. Veitch write as follows: "The special object of our traveller's last journey to Central China was to obtain seeds of this strikingly handsome tree, which was first discovered by l'Abbe David, after whom it was named. In this undertaking Wilson was successful, and we are glad to be in a position to offer it to planters. Only young plants of

*Davidia* at present exist in Europe, and all purchasers may have the honour of flowering it for the first time. In the whole vegetable kingdom there is not a more striking object than a tree of *Davidia* when covered with its pure white bracts, in which state it is conspicuous at a great distance. The tree attains a height of 20ft. to 30ft., and there is little doubt of its hardiness in Great Britain, as it is found only in high elevations, where the winters surpass in severity those experienced in these islands. In our Coombe Wood Nursery plants have withstood 15deg. of frost unprotected."

*China Rose Cramoie Superieure.*—Late in November and, indeed, until the eve of Christmas, when frost is not troublesome, this brilliant red Rose flowers as if it were in mid-summer. The writer has just planted a bed of twenty-four strong roots in a conspicuous position, simply for the sake of the splash of colour which this Rose will give in autumn. It is brighter and freer even than Fellenberg.

*The National Rose Society* has just published two very useful pamphlets. One is called "Hints on Planting Roses," and the other "How to Grow and Show Tea Roses." The last mentioned, as the title indicates, is for the beginner in the culture of Tea Roses for show, and we advise anyone who is anxious to enter the lists in the yearly tournament of flowers to purchase this excellent guide. The information is conveyed in the simplest and clearest way, and, as the planting-time is still with us, the following selections of Tea Roses for show purposes may be acceptable. They are



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WEST DOOR AT ELY CATHEDRAL.

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taken from this pamphlet. The best twenty-four are given as Boadicea, Bridesmaid, Catherine Mermet, Cleopatra, Comtesse de Nadaillac, Ernest Metz, Hon. Edith Gifford, Innocente Pirola, Lady Roberts, Mme. Cusin, Mme. de Watteville, Mme. Hoste, Mme. Jean Dupuy, Maman Cochet, Maréchal Niel (Noisette), Medea, Mrs. Edward Mawley, Muriel Graham, Souvenir d'Elise Vardon, Souvenir de Pierre Notting, Souvenir de S. A. Prince, Souvenir d'un Ami, The Bride, and White Maman Cochet. Best twelve: Bridesmaid, Catherine Mermet, Comtesse de Nadaillac, Innocente Pirola, Maman Cochet, Medea, Mrs. Edward Mawley, Muriel Graham, Souvenir d'Elise Vardon, Souvenir de Pierre Notting, The Bride, and White Maman Cochet.

*Winter Heliotrope.*—This is also known as Petasites, or Cassilago fragrans, and we presume its English name is given because of the flowers' heliotrope-like scent. It is a plant for a rough corner in the shrubbery, and not for any dressed part of the grounds. No particular soil and site are needful. Just plant it where it may roam at will and send its perfume into the winter air.

*Transplanting a Copper Beech Tree.*—In these hurried days, when men are not content to garden patiently, the lifting of large trees is a common practice. The illustration depicts a Copper Beech ready for removal, and the large mass of soil round the roots is an indication that the experiment will succeed. The mechanical contrivance for conveying such a mass of soil may be of the simplest description, but unless soil is kept round the roots, and the planting is skilfully done, the tree will die. The illustration is appropriate, as this is the season for transplanting, and the first warm and dry day should be chosen for the work.

*Work in the Garden.*—Before this probably tender climbers and other plants have been matted up. As these notes are prepared in advance, one cannot write for the moment; but if hard weather is likely, mat up the Choisya, Passion-flower, Ceanothus, Myrtle, and any shrub known to be tender. Of course, much depends upon the locality, and in some places, such as in the South of England and Ireland, the west coast of Scotland, and elsewhere, all this precaution is unnecessary. Tea Roses are best protected by earthing the soil up to the stems. We believe thoroughly in this, especially when they have been recently planted. Never remove dead Fern fronds from the crowns of the plants, as these are Nature's covering in time of frost. The yearly "tidying up" in gardens is responsible for many failures. Continue to plant in fair weather, and do the work well. Careless planting means weakly growth, and frequently the tree dies. When the weather is frosty is the time to wheel in manure. Go over the lawns and grass paths if the weather is suitable, and spud out Daisies, Plantains, and other weeds. There is nothing like an old knife for this; it removes root and all, and the bare patches are soon made good. Finish off pruning and tying in of fruit trees on walls.

## DOROTHY WADHAM.

DAME DOROTHY WADHAM would have placed all lovers of beautiful architecture under a debt to her good taste, even if she had not equally shown her good sense and high generosity by her creation of Wadham College. As a seat of learning it has ever held a high place; as a building it remains the most beautiful example of late Gothic in England, and the union of its grey walls with its perfect old garden, and its ancient turf and trees, constitutes a dream of quiet loveliness. The foundress was a type of the remarkable women of her age. She was one of the Essex Petres, and was almost exactly a contemporary of Queen Elizabeth, whom she outlived by fifteen years. She married a great West Country squire, Nicholas Wadham of Edge, in the quaint village of Branscombe, Devon, and owner of a much larger house, Merifield, in Somerset, where they both lived till his death. Dorothy also had a considerable property in Essex. Nicholas Wadham had saved a respectable fortune, besides keeping his estates, and on his death he and his wife, as they had no



MOVING A COPPER BEECH.

fellows, scholars, but also the cooks. In regard to the latter she was able to "oblige" the Archbishop of Canterbury! Her statutes needed but very slight revision, and these were made by her own directions after the practical experience of her remaining years. Fortunately for the college her life was prolonged till she was eighty-four, and hardly a month before her death she confirmed, in a formal document, the appointment of two scholars, nephews of her secretary and man of business, John Arnold. One of the extraordinary facts about this great Englishwoman is that she never saw her college or its inmates, and is not known to have visited Oxford. Everything was transacted by letter and deed. This is the more astonishing as she was living at the Dower House of Edge, in one of the most out-of-the-way places in England—the parish of Branscombe on the Devon coast, between Sidmouth and Beere, which local tradition still says was "made up of all the bits left over when the world was shaped." Yet there is evidence that she received the news of the death of one of her wardens at Edge, a distance of 120 miles, so quickly that though he died only on March 16th, she appointed his successor in a legal document dated the 19th of the same month.

The volume of "Letters of Dorothy Wadham, 1609–1618" (London, Henry Froude; Oxford, 116, High Street), edited, with excellent and scholarly notes and appendices, by the Rev. R. B. Gardiner, M.A., F.S.A., formerly a scholar of Wadham College, forms a graceful and appropriate tribute to the memory of the foundress by whom the editor, like so many others, benefited. They are all clear and businesslike to the last degree, yet apparently all were dictated, her signature being then placed at the bottom, with her seal. Mr. Gardiner's long acquaintance with the subject enables him to say something interesting in regard to every letter. We note especially that the features of the chapel, which is good and pure Gothic, though built in the days of James I., were probably just such as she and her masons saw in the churches near Merifield. Very firm in her rule, although at such a distance, Dorothy is kindness itself. She sends "her good company," as she calls the whole body in addressing her letters, £10 to keep Christmas with and have a "gawdy"—a considerable sum in those days; and later she augments their stipends and increases the length of the tenure of fellowship in a most handsome way. When Dorothy died, the father of one of the fellows (a mercer) supplied black cloth to the value of £157 17s. 2d., and, we are glad to see, gave the college a flagon of silver of 400z. weight. The whole book is a record of good sense and kindly feeling, and the editor deserves well of his readers for awakening these echoes of a good and noble past.

children, decided to perpetuate their name and race by founding a college which should preserve the name of Wadham from oblivion. Hardly was Nicholas buried than this remarkable lady wrote, by her secretary, to the Earl of Salisbury, then Lord High Treasurer, and acquainted him with her husband's wishes, and asked permission to carry them out. She was then seventy-five years old; yet so practical and determined was she, in her loyal remembrance of her husband's wishes, that in three years she had bought the site, built the college, on plans made to her orders, and largely by her own workmen sent from Somerset—she employed no architect—drawn up and settled all the statutes, conveyed the endowment, which she afterwards increased, filled up the foundation herself with a warden, sub-warden, two chaplains, two clerks, fifteen fellows, seven of whom were either officers or lecturers, and fifteen scholars. She kept every item of general management in her own hands until her death—not only the wardens,

## A CHRISTMAS SHOOT IN INDIA.



THE LINE OF HOWDAHs.

A CHRISTMAS "shikar" at the foot of the Himalayas is a gathering of sportsmen and others for a week's holiday in the jungles. Elephants are requisitioned from all quarters, tents of all sizes and shapes are pitched, and on the appointed day guests arrive from all parts and by all manner of quaint modes of conveyance. Old hands come prepared for a week's quiet sojourn in the jungles; youngsters full of eternal hope of 11ft. tigers and record stags. Nine times out of ten the old stager is justified, on the tenth the youngster returns rejoicing. For, at this time of year, high elephant grass and dense undergrowth of scrub preclude all certainty as to the whereabouts of tigers or other big game. A line of elephants is formed, and the result left to Providence. Uncertainty as regards sport, however, is compensated for by glorious weather. Only those who have experienced it know the exhilaration of a Christmas morning in Indian jungles. The sense of freedom from harness, of peace on earth and goodwill, of a subtle fitness of environment—all combine insensibly to lighten the cares and burdens of life. A Christmas shikar is essentially a friendly picnic in the jungle, with a pleasing possibility of sport in the background. In this, as in all forms of sport, blank days are of interest to the individual only. It is not till mellowed by time that the pleasing incidents of an expedition that failed, from a sporting point of view, grow on the mind. Success, on the other hand, is self-evident and blatant. None the less, it is of success, and not comparative failure, that others care to hear. Let us, then, chronicle the incidents of a successful day in a week of Indian shikar during Christmas.

The howdah and line elephants have been sent on ahead to the first beat, as the party sit down to breakfast. Christmas appetites are brought to bear on that meal. Then the fast pad elephants are called up, pipes are lit, and ladies and sportsmen mount. A procession in single file, along a shady forest road,

glittering and sparkling with dew and a suspicion of frost, brings us to an open plain of waving grass. In a sandy river-bed on its skirts are collected the howdah and beat elephants, a dark mass of whisking tails and waving trunks. This clustered gang of some forty pachyderms is imposing enough to draw forth our camera. Also, for the purpose of this sketch, the howdah animals are separated and drawn up in line, and a plate exposed as the members of the party pose in front. Lots are now drawn for places, some of the guns being told off to accompany the line, others to pass ahead and down the sides of the beat, to take up positions as "stops." In the half-hour of grace given to the stops to get to their places, our

host and organiser of the shoot arranges his line. And here let it be noted in passing that the director of a big shikar party has need of considerable powers of organisation. Some forty elephants, including the inevitable number of nervous, unsteady animals, with drivers and attendants, in a great plain of dense, high grass, call for powers of control and decision on the part of the organiser, which are still further exercised when unforeseen contingencies arise during a beat. For this beat we are sent on stop, and take up our position as directed, to the left of the line, in a dry, sandy river-bed that divides the grass plain from the heavy forest. Our special mission is to lay low anything that may break from the beat, across the river-bed, to the forest.

Away over the feathery tops of the grass, nearly a mile distant, the line advances, submerged and invisible except for the tops of the howdahs of the guns in line. An occasional trumpet from some unsteady elephant, and consequent commotion among those in the vicinity, proclaim the breaking back of some animal, probably a boar, the *bête noir* of all elephants. This is repeated at intervals, as the line advances. Now and then a rifle shot rings out in the crisp morning air, as the guns in line obtain a fleeting glimpse of a "para" or "chital" stag in the grass. As



A FOREST ROAD.



the line draws slowly nearer, and the faint rustle of its advance becomes audible, our interest loses its impersonal character. A slight waving and swish on the edge of the grass attracts our attention, and with rifle at the ready, our eyes and ears are strained towards the spot. Silently and stealthily the great ears and head of a doe "chital" appear, and a moment after she leads the way with dainty steps across the river-bed. In her wake a dozen other dappled beauties, including young, and a couple of fine stags with horns in velvet, trip lightly over the open space. They break into a gentle trot, and one by one plunge into the sanctuary of the adjoining "sal" forest. We lower our weapon, and remain lost in admiration at one of the most beautiful sights the jungle has to offer. The bloodthirsty little Nepalese shikari in the back of our howdah draws a long breath through his teeth. Long training has taught him the sahib's queer notions of sport, but his irrepressible instinct for slaughter finds vent in that uncontrollable sigh of regret whenever big game is allowed to pass unmolested. Soon our attention is again rivetted on the edge of the grass. Here evidently comes some larger and heavier animal, and well within shot, too, should it decide to break. Suddenly the heavy rustling ceases, and for a full five minutes the animal stands invisible, without sound or motion, within 50 yds. of our elephant. In the interval of suspense we imagine it listening and peering through the tangle to make sure that the dreaded open space ahead is clear. A sudden trumpet from a line elephant decides its action, and with a heavy



A THIRTY-EIGHT-INCH SAMBUR STAG.

rush a grand Sambur stag bursts into the river-bed. With horns laid well back over his flanks, at a long easy gallop, he makes for the forest, which he is destined never to reach. From the moment he appears the bead glitters on his dark brown shoulder, and as he is within a few strides of safety the report rings out, answered by a welcome thud. With a tingle of satisfaction we see him turn a complete somersault, and lie kicking in his tracks. As he

falls his harem of two hinds break out of the grass. They gallop madly across the sand, alarmed at the shot. Suddenly catching sight of their lord in his death throes, with a snort of terror they shy on either side of him, and dash away, crashing through the dark forest.

By this time the line is nearly on our level. Hailing the nearest pad elephant, we dismount, and, with the aid of several willing hands, assist in hoisting the stag on to its back. Here he is securely lashed, and, with horns showing proudly over the grass tops, he follows the beat for the rest of the day. Later on he is duly photographed as he lies preparatory to being deprived of his trophies by the keen little Nepalese shikari. The line has now passed on, and we hasten to rejoin it. The end stops are still several hundred yards ahead, and, as we approach, a fusillade on the right and violent commotion among the elephants indicate something serious in progress. By the time we arrive the excitement has subsided. Two young sportsmen on the right appear to have been spattering the



MORNING TOILETS.





THE BEATER ELEPHANTS.

Indian continent with lead, firing into the waving grass at some unseen animal as it attempted to escape the advancing line, a proceeding indulged in by inexperienced shots possessed of more keenness and ammunition than discretion. "Think it was a leopard," excitedly exclaims one. "Too big and slow; more like a tiger," maintains the other. Old Shere Khan, a mahout grown grey on an elephant's neck in quest of big game, in answer to our host, gives it as his opinion that the animal was a tiger. This opinion is based on his knowledge of his elephant's behaviour in presence of various kinds of game. He further adds that it has broken away to the right towards a nullah of grass and jungle, visible about a mile away.

The beat being over, a bugle summons the broken line. As the pad elephants pass us we notice the bag—a Nilgai bull, a small Sam Sambar stag, a very fine Para, and our own contribution. A boar has also been left behind, to be brought in later by the lower castes of followers, who indulge in pork. It is not permissible to load the unclean beast on an elephant.

A move towards the grass nullah is now ordered, and for this beat we are told off for the line. The grass here is so dense that the elephants have considerable difficulty in forcing their way through. The chances of hitting off the line of the supposed retreating tiger are,

and is now outflanking it in his endeavour to break back. There is not a moment to be lost, or to wheel the line. Should he continue



A NINE-FEET NINE-INCH TIGER.

on his present course he may possibly cross another open space about 50yds. to our left rear. Hastily directing our mahout to face three-quarters left about, we hasten back some 20yds. and halt. With rifle ready, eyes and ears glued to the open piece of ground some 10yds. wide, we wait breathlessly. The chances are all against us, for there is dense grass on all sides, and no particular reason why the alarmed animal should cut across that particular open space, except that it is in his line of retreat. There are several moments of the keenest suspense, then a slight rustle of the grass, and a fine tiger bursts into view. He is going at a curious lop-sided canter. The shot is the merest snap, the rifle coming up like a shot-gun, and the trigger pulled without any conscious aiming or sighting. The effect is truly amazing. With fore and hind legs extended, nose on the ground under his chest, the tiger stops dead. Not a sound or motion follows. A moment of silence, then "Yah Allah!" ejaculates the mahout. "Dead!" yells the excited little man at the back, and we shout the word at the top of our lungs to the nearest line elephant. It is swiftly passed along, and as the line turns in file towards us we hustle our elephant to the spot.



THE EVENING DRINK.

Descending hastily from the howdah, a cautious approach is made. But the attitude of the beast betokens death, and caution is unnecessary. A heavy spurt of blood is shooting from his neck. The bullet has taken him at the junction of neck and shoulder; paralysis and death were instantaneous, hence the striking attitude. "A most holy fluke" is our inward comment, but it will be long ere the dramatic effect of that snap-shot fades from our mind. Now, for the first time, we notice blood on the hind foot of the tiger. Stooping to examine it, we find a small bullet-wound a few inches above the pad, which has broken the bone. The curious lurching canter of the beast as he broke into the open is now accounted for. It is also clear that the fortunate sportsman on the right of the line scored one lucky hit out of his numerous shots into the grass. The trophy is his by right of first blood, and our regret is tempered with satisfaction at having stopped a wounded beast that would not otherwise have been brought to bag, and whose future career would, in all probability, have resulted in damage to human life.

The tiger is now decently laid out, measured, admired, and photographed. He is a fine young male in the pink of condition,

with a beautifully thick winter coat. He tapes 9ft. 6in., and has a magnificent skin. With genuine sportsmanlike feeling the young sportsman presses the trophy on us, remarking jocularly that had the tiger been but 3in. shorter his shot would have followed the rest into the grass. Needless to say, the unselfish offer is not entertained, and we warmly congratulate him on the possession of as fine a tiger-skin as any man could desire.

But now it is long past midday, and there is an unspoken feeling of lunch in the air. Our hostess summons the provision elephant, a shady tree is selected, and the party dispose of a Christmas tiffin as the events of the morning are discussed. The afternoon is spent in a beat for small game in a bee-line for camp. Black and grey partridges, florican, and hares form the bag, and the shooting is of the prettiest. As the shades of dusk close on the short winter day, great-coats and pipes are drawn forth, and the party breaks up into small groups that wend their way towards the twinkling lights of the camp across the water. We expose our last plate on a group of elephants as they drink their fill after labours that have contributed so essentially to the success of a memorable day in our Christmas shikar. H. H. S.

## ST. CHRISTOPHER OF THE GAEL.

BY FIONA MACLEOD.

BEHIND the wattle-woven house  
Nial the Mighty gently crept  
From out a screen of ash-tree boughs  
To where a captive whiterobe slept.

Lightly he moved, as though ashamed;  
To right and left he glanced his fears.  
Nial the Mighty was he named  
Though but an untried youth in years—

But tall he was, as tall as he,  
White Dermid of the magic sword,  
Or Torcall of the Hebrid Sea  
Or great Cuhooin of the Ford;

Strong as the strongest, too, he was:  
As Balor of the Evil Eye;  
As Fionn who kept the Ulster Pass  
From dawn till blood-flusht sunset sky.

Much had he pondered all that day  
The mystery of the men who died  
On crosses raised along the way,  
And perished singing side by side.

Modred the chief had sailed the Moyle,  
Had reached Iona's guardless shore,  
Had seized the monks when at their toil  
And carried northward, bound, a score.

Some he had thrust into the deep,  
To see if magic fins would rise:  
Some from high rocks he forced to leap,  
To see wings fall from out the skies:

Some he had pinned upon tall spears,  
Some tossed on shields with brazen clang,  
To see if through their blood and tears  
Their god would hear the hymns they sang.

But when his oarsmen flung their oars,  
And laughed to see across the foam  
The glimmer of the highland shores  
And smoke-wreaths of the hidden home,

Modred was weary of his sport.  
All day he brooded as he strode  
Betwixt the reef-encircled port  
And the oak-grove of the Sacred Road.

At night he bade his warriors raise  
Seven crosses where the foamswept strand  
Lay still and white beyond the blaze  
Of the hundred camp-fires of the land.

The women milked the late-come kye,  
The children raced in laughing glee;  
Like sheep from out the fold of the sky  
Stars leapt and stared at earth and sea.

At times a wild and plaintive air  
Made delicate music far away:  
A hill-fox barked before its lair:  
The white owl hawked its shadowy prey.

But at the rising of the moon  
The druids came from grove and glen,  
And to the chanting of a rune  
Crucified St. Columba's men.

They died in silence side by side,  
But first they sang the evening hymn:  
By midnight all but one had died,  
At dawn he too was grey and grim.

One monk alone had Modred kept,  
A youth with hair of golden-red,  
Who never once had sighed or wept,  
Not once had bowed his proud young head.

Broken he lay, and bound with thongs.  
Thus had he seen his brothers toss  
Like crows transfix'd upon great prongs,  
Till death crept up each silent cross.

Night grew to dawn, to scarlet morn;  
Day waned to firelit, starlit night:  
But still with eyes of passionate scorn  
He dared the worst of Modred's might.

When from the wattle-woven house  
Nial the Mighty softly stepped,  
And peered beneath the ash-tree boughs  
To where he thought the whiterobe slept,

He heard the monk's words rise in prayer,  
He heard a hymn's ascending breath—  
"Christ, Son of God, to Thee I fare  
This night upon the wings of death."

Nial the Mighty crossed the space,  
He waited till the monk had ceased;  
Then, leaning o'er the foam-white face,  
He stared upon the dauntless priest.

"Speak low," he said, "and tell me this:  
Who is the king you hold so great?—  
Your eyes are dauntless flames of bliss  
Though Modred taunts you with his hate:—

"This god or king, is He more strong  
Than Modred is? And does He sleep  
That thus your death-in-life is long,  
And bonds your aching body keep?"

The monk's eyes stared in Nial's eyes:  
"Young giant with a child's white heart,  
I see a cross take shape and rise,  
And thou upon it nailed art!"

Nial looked back: no cross he saw  
Looming from out the dreadful night:  
Yet all his soul was filled with awe,  
A thundercloud with heart of light.

"Tell me thy name," he said, "and why  
Thou waitest thus the druid knife,  
And care not if to live or die?  
Monk, hast thou little care of life?"

"Great care of that I have," he said,  
And looked at Nial with eyes of fire:  
"My life begins when I am dead,  
There only is my heart's desire."

Nial the mighty sighed. "Thy words  
Are as the idle froth of foam,  
Or clashing of triumphant swords  
When Modred brings the foray home.

"My name is Nial: Nial the Strong:  
A lad in years, but as you see  
More great than heroes of old song  
Or any lordly men that be.

"To Modred have I come from far,  
O'er many a hill and strath and stream,  
To be a mighty sword in war,  
And this because I dreamed a dream:

"My dream was that my strength so great  
Should serve the greatest king there is:  
Modred the Pict thus all men rate,  
And so I sought his far-off Liss.

"But if there be a greater yet,  
A king or god whom he doth fear,  
My service he shall no more get,  
My strength shall rust no longer here."

The monk's face gladdened. "Go, now, go:  
To Modred go: he sitteth dumb,  
And broods on what he fain would know:  
And say '*O King, the Cross is come!*'"

"Then shall the king arise in wrath,  
And bid you go from out his sight,  
For if he meet you on his path  
He'll leave you stark and still and white.

"Thus shall he show, great king and all,  
He fears the glorious Cross of Christ,  
And dreads to hear slain voices call  
For vengeance on the sacrificed.

"But, Nial, come not here again:  
Long before dawn my soul shall be  
Beyond the reach of any pain  
That Modred dreams to prove on me.

"Go forth thyself at dawn, and say  
'This is Christ's holy natal morn,  
My king is He from forth this day  
When He to save mankind was born':

"Go forth and seek a lonely place  
Where a great river fills the wild;  
There bide, and let thy strength be grace,  
And wait the Coming of a Child.

"A wondrous thing shall then befall:  
And when thou seek'st if it be true,  
Green leaves along thy staff shall crawl,  
With flowers of every lovely hue."

The monk's face whitened, like sea-foam:  
Seaward he stared, and sighed "I go—  
Farewell—my Lord Christ calls me home!"  
Nial stooped and saw death's final throe.

An hour before the dawn he rose  
And sought out Modred, brooding, dumb;  
"O King," he said, "my bond I close,  
King Christ I seek: the Cross is come!"

Swift as a stag's leap from a height  
King Modred drew his dreadful sword:  
Then as a snow-wraith, silent, white,  
He stared and passed without a word.

Before the flush of dawn was red  
A druid came to Nial the Great:  
"The doom of death hath Modred said,  
Yet fears this Christ's mysterious hate:

"So get you hence, you giant-thewed man:  
Go your own way: come not again:  
No more are you of Modred's clan:  
Go now, forthwith, lest you be slain."

Nial went forth with gladsome face;  
No more of Modred's clan he was:  
"Now, now," he cried, "Christ's trail I'll trace,  
And nowhere turn, and nowhere pause."

He laughed to think how Modred feared  
The wrath of Christ, the monk's white king:  
"A greater than Modred hath appeared,  
To Him my sword and strength I bring."

All day, all night, he walked afar:  
He saw the moon rise white and still:  
The evening and the morning star:  
The sunrise burn upon the hill.

He heard the moaning of the seas,  
The vast sigh of the sunswept plain,  
The myriad surge of forest-trees;  
Saw dusk and night return again.

At falling of the dusk he stood  
Upon a wild and desert land:  
Dark fruit he gathered for his food,  
Drank water from his hollowed hand,

Cut from an ash a mighty bough  
And trimmed and shaped it to the half:  
"Safe in the desert am I now,  
With sword," he said, "and with this staff."

The stars came out: Arcturus hung  
His ice-blue fire far down the sky:  
The Great Bear through the darkness swung:  
The Seven Watchers rose on high.

A great moon flooded all the west.  
Silence came out of earth and sea  
And lay upon the husht world's breast,  
And breathed mysteriously.

Three hours Nial walked, three hours and more:  
Then halted when beyond the plain  
He stood upon that river's shore  
The dying monk had bid him gain.

A little house he saw: clay-wrought,  
Of wattle woven through and through:  
Then, all his weariness forgot,  
The joy of drowning-sleep he knew.

Three hours he slept, and then he heard  
A voice—and yet a voice so low  
It might have been a dreaming bird  
Safe-nested by the rushing flow.

Almost he slept: once more: then, *Hush!*  
Once more he heard above the noise  
And tempest of the river's rush  
The thin faint words of a child's voice.

*"Good Sir, awake from sleep and dream  
Good Sir, come out and carry me  
Across this dark and raging stream  
Till safe on the other side I be."*

Great Nial shivered on his bed:  
"No human creature calls this night,  
It is a wild fetch of the dead,"  
He thought, and shrunk, and shook with fright.

Once more he heard that infant-cry:  
*"Come out, Good Sir, or else I drown—  
Come out, Good Sir, or else I die  
And you, too, lose a golden crown."*

"A golden crown"—so Nial thought—  
"No—no—not thus shall I be ta'en!  
Keep, ghost-of-the-night, your crown gold-wrought—  
Of sleep and peace I am full fain!"

Once more the windy dark was filled  
With lonely cry, with sobbing plaint:  
Nial's heart grew sore, its fear was stilled,  
King Christ, he knew, would scorn him faint.

"Up, up thou coward, thou sluggard, thou,"  
He cried, and sprang from off his bed—  
"No crown thou seekest for thy brow,  
But help for one in pain and dread!"

Out in the wide and lonely dark  
No fetch he saw, no shape, no child:  
Almost he turned again—but *hark!*  
A song rose o'er the waters wild:

*A king am I  
Tho' a little Child,  
Son of God am I,  
Meek and mild,  
Beautiful  
Because God hath said  
Let my cup be full  
Of wine and bread.*

*Come to me  
Shaken heart,  
Shaken heart!  
I will not flee.  
My heart  
Is thy heart  
O shaken heart!  
Stoop to my Cup,  
Sup,*



*Drink of the wine :  
The wine and the bread,  
Saith God,  
Are mine—  
My Flesh and my Blood !*

*Throw thy sword in the flood :  
Come, shaken heart :  
Fearful thou art !  
Have no more fear—  
Lo, I am here,  
The little One,  
The Son,  
Thy Lord and thy King.*

*It is I who sing :  
Christ, your King . . .  
Be not afraid :  
Look, I am Light,  
A great star  
Seen from afar  
In the darkness of night :  
I am Light,  
Be not afraid . . .  
Wade, wade  
Into the deep flood !  
Think of the Bread,  
The Wine and the Bread  
That are my Flesh and Blood.  
Cross, cross the Flood,  
Sure is the goal . . .  
Be not afraid  
O Soul,  
Be not afraid !*

Nial's heart was filled with joy and pain :  
"This is my king, my king indeed :  
To think that drown'd in sleep I've lain  
When Christ the Child-God crieth in need !"

Swift from his wattled hut he strode,  
Stumbling among the grass and bent,  
And, seeking where the river flowed,  
Far o'er the dark flood peered and leant :

Then suddenly beside him saw  
A little Child all clad in white :  
He bowed his head in love and awe,  
Then lifted high his burthen light.

High on his shoulders sat the Child,  
While with strong limbs he fared among  
The rushing waters black and wild  
And where the fiercest currents swung.

The waters rose more high, more high,  
Higher and higher every yard . . .  
Nial stumbled on with sob and sigh,  
Christ heard him panting sore and hard.

"O Child," Nial cried, "forbear, forbear !  
Hark you not how these waters whirled !  
The weight of all the earth I bear,  
The weary weight of all the world !"

"Christopher !" . . . low above the noise.  
The rush, the darkness, Nial heard  
The far-off music of a Voice  
That said all things in saying one word —

"Christopher . . . this thy name shall be !  
Christ-bearer is thy name, even so  
Because of service done to me  
Heavy with weight of the world's woe."

With breaking sobs, with panting breath  
Christopher grasped a bent-held done,  
Then with flung staff and as in death  
Forward he fell in a heavy swoon.

All night he lay in silence there,  
But safe from reach of surging tide :  
White angels had him in their care,  
Christ healed and watched him side by side.

When all the silver wings of dawn  
Had waved above the rose-flusht east,  
Christopher woke . . . his dream was gone.  
The angelic songs had ceased.

Was it a dream in very deed,  
He wondered, broken, trembling, dazed ?  
His staff he lifted from the mead  
And as an upright sapling raised.

Lo, it was as the monk had said—  
*If he would prove the vision true,  
His staff would blossom to its head  
With flowers of every lovely hue.*

Christopher bowed : before his eyes  
Christ's love fulfilled the holy hour . . .  
A south-wind blew, green leaves did rise  
And the staff bloomed a myriad flower !

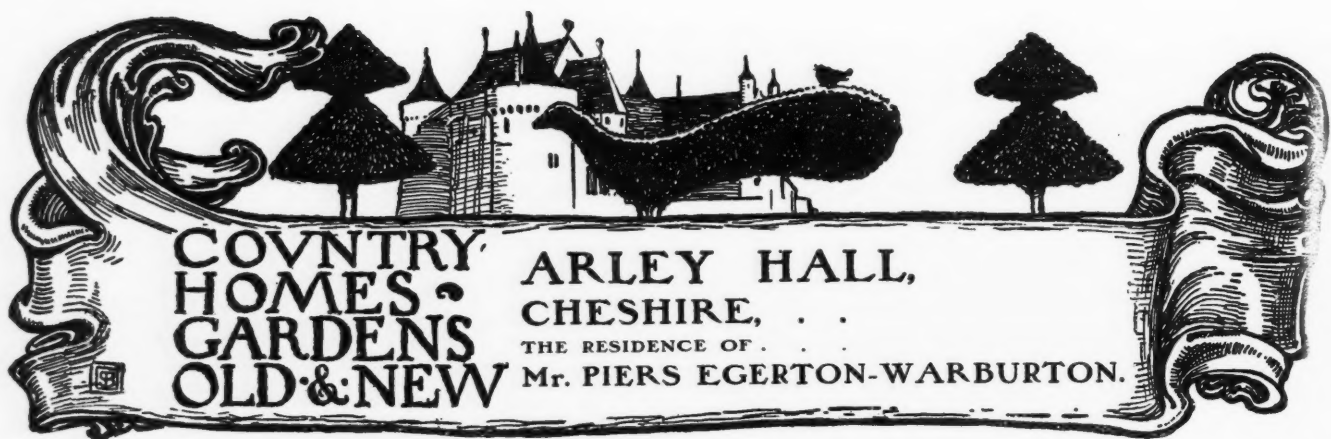
Christopher bowed in holy prayer,  
While Christ's love fell like healing dew :  
God's father-hand was on him there :  
The peace of perfect peace he knew.



W. Rawlings.

AT WALBERSWICK.

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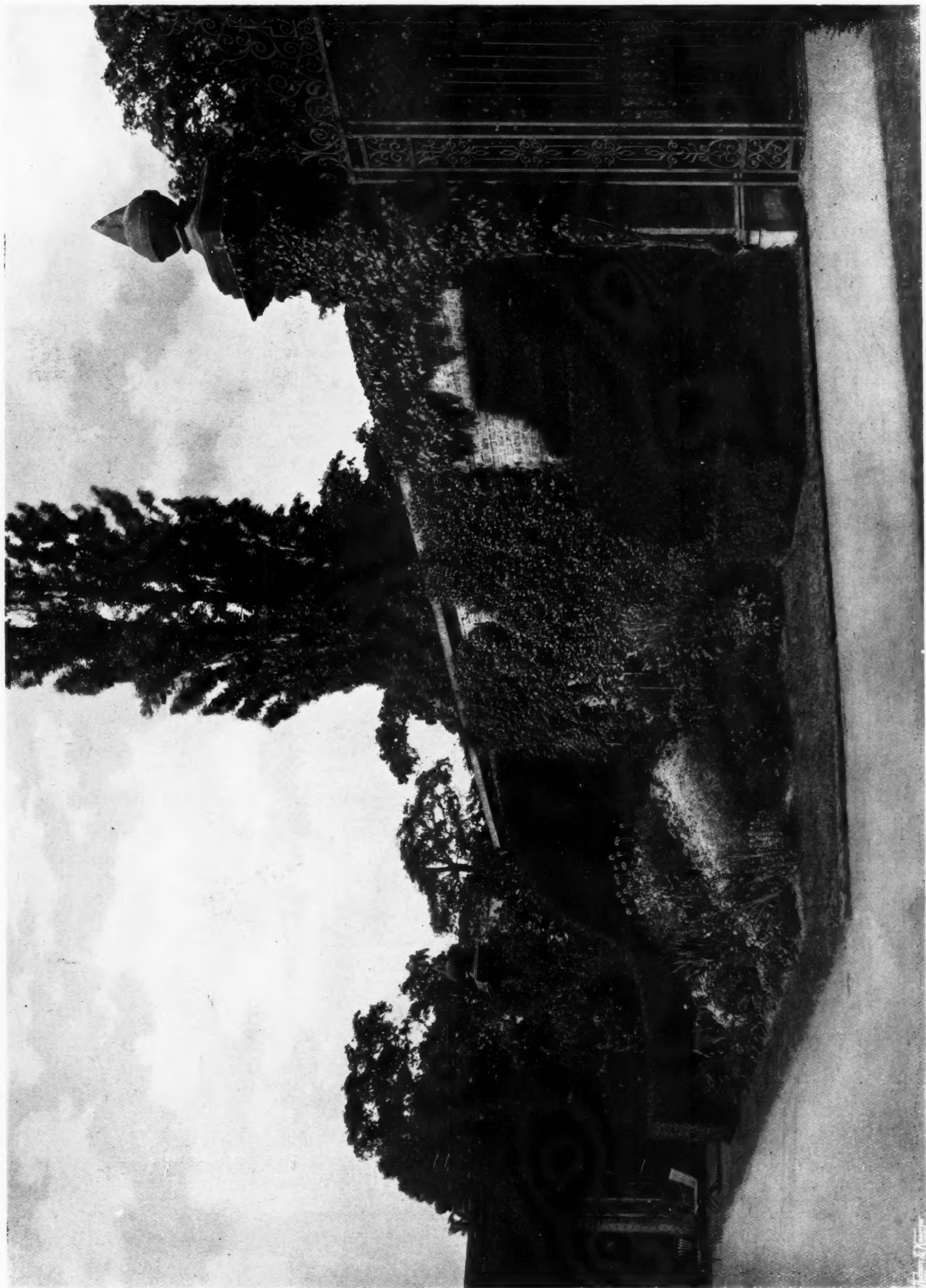
**A**RLEY HALL is a mansion which has many claims to the delighted appreciation of Englishmen. It is fair to behold in its gracious architectural forms and its superb and stately gardens. Upon it have been lavished all the love and care that those who have possessed it could bestow. Their thought in the fashioning of it and their judicious planning, like their sustained watchfulness in the maintenance of it, are revealed in every part and detail of the structure and its surroundings. Upon these broad Cheshire acres have lived their sires since first the hunter's horn resounded in the forest, and their latest descendants have retained the tastes and pursued the avocations of those who have gone before. All these are things that appeal to us with irresistible fascination, and, though the discerning eye recognises that the house is not itself old, we know that without its history and environment of tradition it could never have been as we see it. The mansion is a noble example of enriched Jacobean architecture, and its gardens have a subtle beauty and dignified character that have often tempted the painter's brush, though we question whether they have ever been so finely represented as in the pictures we publish to-day.

Before we speak of Arley as it stands, let us go back to its beginning, so that we may gain some trace of the character and

memories of the place. Remembering that it is located not far from the marches of Wales, it is interesting to know that the manor of Aston juxta Budworth, within the bounds of which the house stands, was anciently held of John, Constable of Chester, by the service of rendering a Welsh lance on each St. Bartholomew's Day. There lived—"temp. Will. Conq."—a certain Odard, from whom descended Hugh de Dutton, whose son was Adam of the same, and this Adam acquired in marriage with the daughter of Roger Fitz Alured the manor of Warburton, from which his descendants were to take their name. It was his son, Sir Geoffrey or Galfrid de Dutton, who acquired the manor of Aston with Arley. Now this same Geoffrey was a crusading knight, who did valiant deeds against the Paynim, and in particular vanquished a Saracen in battle, as is recorded by a chronicler in the Harleian MSS.—Lawrence Bostocke, 1572—wherein it is said that the victorious knight began thereafter to seal with the Saracen's head, which is still the crest of the Warburtons. Four other Geoffreys followed, and then came in the name of Piers or Peter, which has ever since remained with the family. There was in those times a deer park at Arley, and from a deed of Sir Geoffrey, last of the four, who attended the Black Prince to Aquitaine, the Warburtons appear to have had a house there as early as 1346. Piers Warburton, his son, was







"COUNTRY LIFE."

YEW BUTTRESS, THE ALCOVE WALK

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FROM THE ALCOVE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

on the side of Hotspur in the fatal battle of Shrewsbury, but escaped with his head and received the Royal pardon from Henry IV.

Two generations later came another Peter—Wise Piers, as he was called—who died in 1495, the builder, about 1469, of the first Arley Hall of which there is definite record. It was quadrangular, standing within a moat, doubtless approached by a drawbridge, and was built upon a base of stone, all of timber, after the common fashion of building in those parts. Such houses as Moreton and Bramall, to name no more, suggest to us its exact type, with its enriched timber-work, carved and panelled,

and filled in with plaster, and its great bays, and arcaded cloister to grace the courtyard. Here dwelt the builder's descendants, all men of note and fame in the shire—his son, Sir John Warburton of Warburton and Arley, who was a knight of the body to Henry VII., sheriff of Halton, and high sheriff of Cheshire, and who died in the fifteenth year of Henry VIII., and after him several Peters (or Piers) and Geoffreys. Sir Geoffrey Warburton, the first baronet, created in 1650, succeeded his brother in the possession of Warburton and Arley in 1641, and married a daughter of Middleton of Chirk. The ancient house was probably in splendid mediæval state in his days, with



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THE SOUTH SIDE, ALCOVE WALK.

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later modifications to suit the changing taste, and the time came when the moat was filled up, and the stout drawbridge no longer held aloof the stranger, with whom the warder had parleyed from the tower. It was described by one Webb, in 1621, with high encomium, as "that beautiful house of Arley that doth, as it well may, show itself to beholders afar off, as a place to be regarded—the famous seat of Warburtons, by succession of many renowned knights of great worth and estimation." We may, moreover, infer

something as to the sturdy character of the old house from the ancient barn remaining, which was coeval with it, built with massive oaken beams, or rather trees, springing from the ground, and meeting above at the ridge of the roof, and thus spanning the interior with a series of pointed arches, the sides being filled in with slabs of split oak, seamed and scarred with age.

In the ancient edifice resided successive baronets—Sir Peter Warburton, sheriff of Cheshire in 1689; Sir George, who represented his county in four Parliaments, 1702-22; and another Sir Peter, who, succeeding in 1743, was sheriff of Cheshire in 1744, and married a daughter of the Earl of Derby. By the middle of the eighteenth century the old house of Arley had ceased to



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grandsires, placed upon it the Virgilian line, "*Stat fortuna domus, et avi numerantur avorum.*" The stone upon which he thus alluded to the prosperity of his house was discovered during the building of the present edifice. The patient and ponderous Ormerod, diligent describer of the shire, thus speaks of what he saw of Arley early in the last century: "The present house forms a quadrangle of 114ft. in front by 130ft. in depth, enclosing a court 68ft. by 40ft., laid out with parterres of flowers, around which there was an open colonnade, which is now formed into a close passage. The hall, which is used as an eating-room, is 38ft. by 32ft., and about 31ft. in height, finished in the Gothic style, with a grand ceiling. The drawing-room is an addition by the late baronet's father, and

satisfy the requirements and tastes of the time. It was the Georgian age, which had little understanding of reverence for antiquity, and, moreover, it may be surmised that Arley Hall, which had breasted the blasts of 300 years, sweeping across the open country, had fallen somewhat into decay. Sir Peter, the fourth baronet, was loath to destroy it, so, in or about 1758, he encased it with brick, and otherwise altered it to his mind, and, proud of his long descent, and glorying in numbering the grandsires of his



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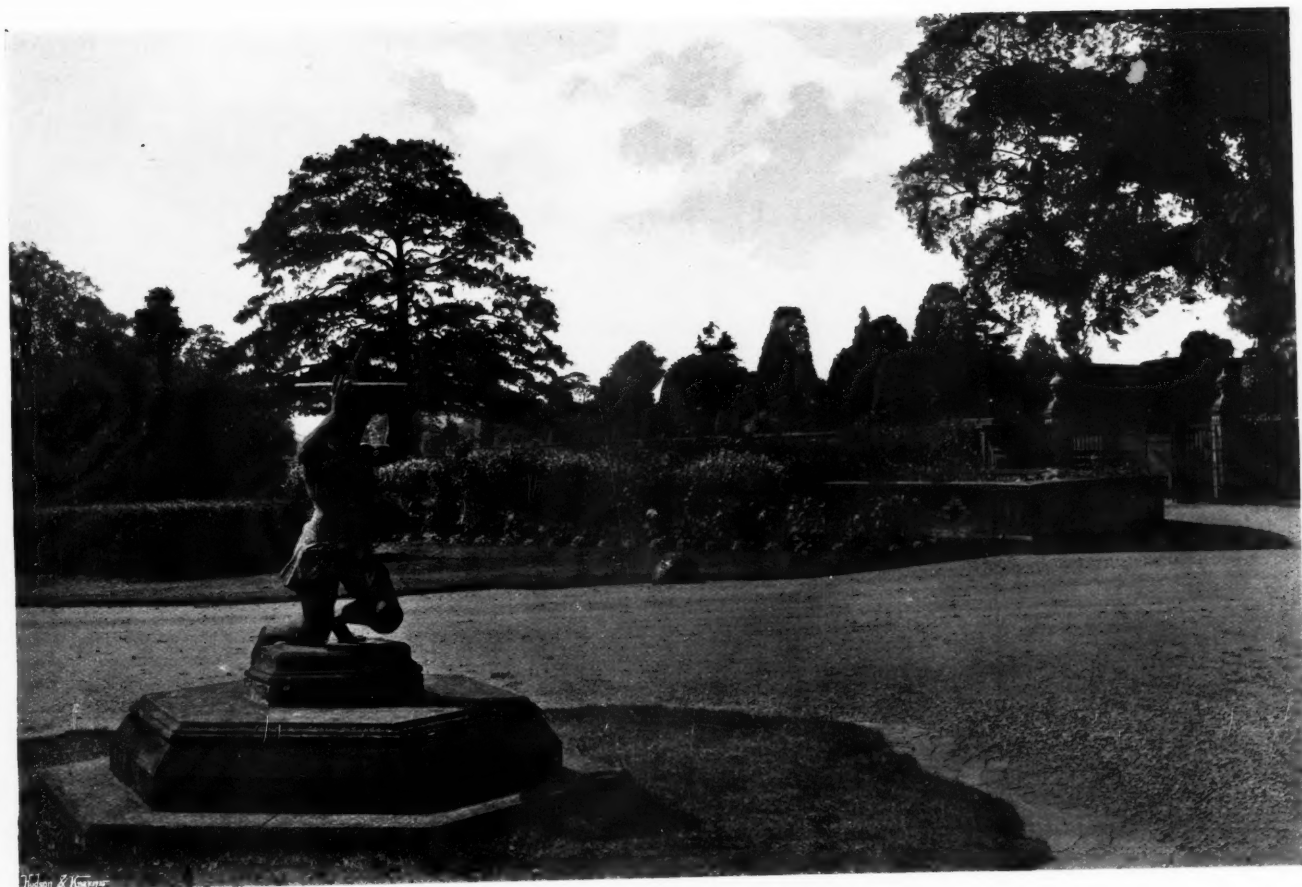


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HERBACEOUS BORDERS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



John & James

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FROM THE HALL DOOR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

is 36ft. by 24ft. The house includes a domestic chapel, and was surrounded by a moat now chiefly filled up." When Ormerod wrote, the fifth and last baronet, Sir Peter, had recently died (1813). He was a gentleman well known far beyond the bounds of his shire, where he was a familiar figure in the hunting-field and kept a pack of hounds.

When the last baronet was dead, his estates descended to his grand-nephew, Rowland Eyles Egerton-Warburton, a member of another great Cheshire family, whose father had added the name of Warburton to his own patronymic. Mr. Egerton-Warburton was a very prominent man in his shire, and the builder of the present Arley Hall. To him it owes its gracious dignity and beauty, and much of the glory of its gardens, though, since his death in 1891, his son and successor has very greatly beautified, arranged, and perfected the latter. The late Mr. Egerton-Warburton was a gentleman of strong and genial personality, who devoted himself to country pursuits, the building of his house, and the improvement of his estates. In the picture of the stables, which are approached between palisades of lime trees, and have a quaint timber-gabled archway, flanked by the most picturesque of buildings, it will be noticed that the weather-vane on the delightful bell-turret is a huntsman at the gallop.



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THE EAST GARDEN AND THE CHAPEL. "COUNTRY LIFE."

Here are indicated the tastes and the pleasures of this good country gentleman, who was famous in the hunting-field, and beguiled his leisure by writing sporting verses for the delight of his friends of the Old Tarporley Hunt Club. They possess uncommon spirit and elegance, many of them are familiar to sporting men, and it is pardonable to give one well-known verse often sung, taken from the delightful volume by the builder of the house we depict. His sporting verses reached their eighth edition in 1887:

"Stags in the forest lie, nares in the valley-o!  
Web-footed otters are spear'd in the locks;  
Beasts of the chase that are not worth a Tally-ho!  
All are surpass'd by the gorse-cover fox!  
Fishing, though pleasant,  
I sing not at present,  
Nor shooting the pheasant,  
Nor fighting of cocks;  
Song shall declare a way  
How to drive care away,  
Pain and despair away,  
Hunting the fox!"

Such was the builder of Arley Hall. The house was begun in 1833, and the work upon which was continued during many

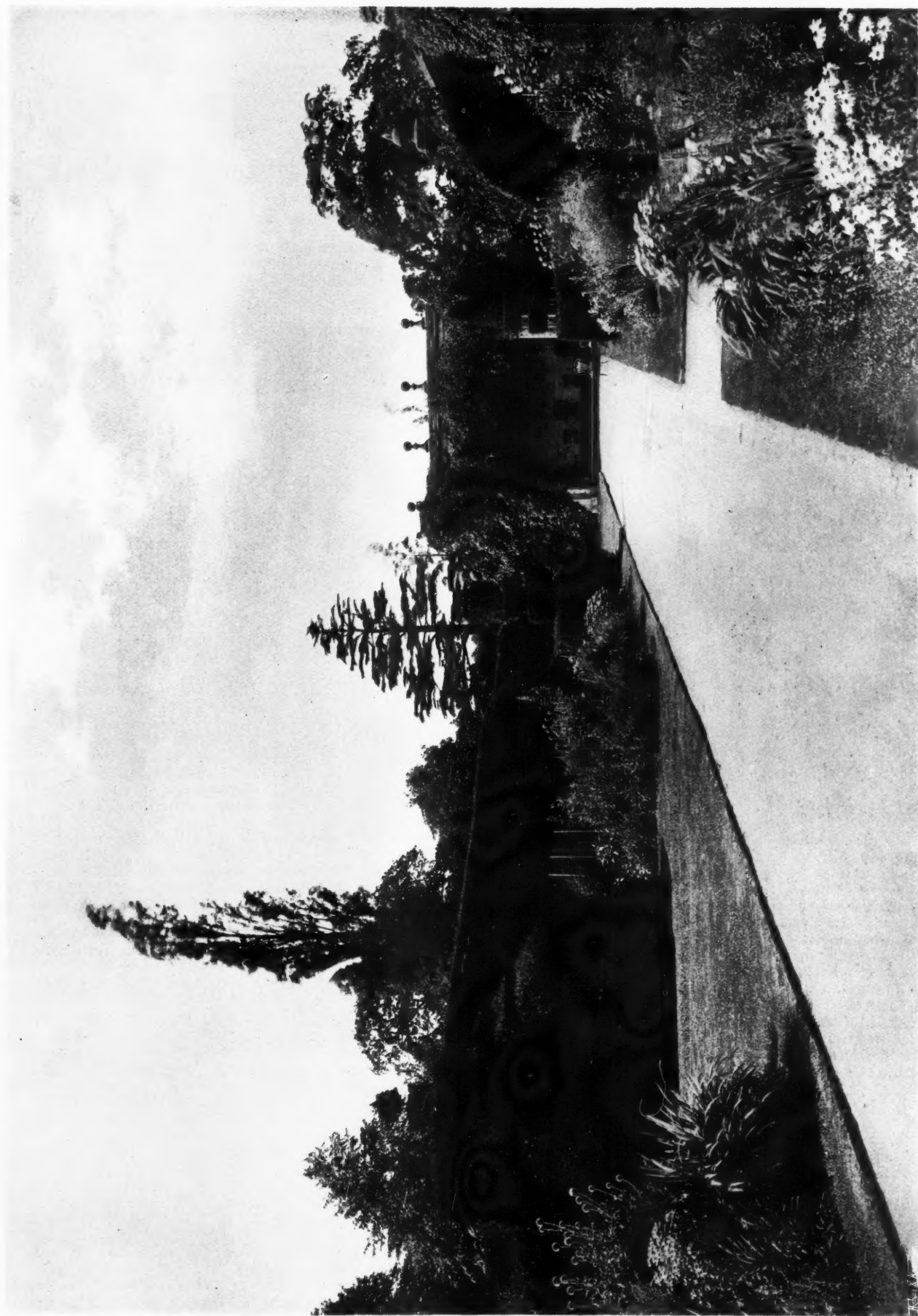


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ILEX AND YEW.

"COUNTRY LIFE."





THE ALCOVE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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subsequent years. It is a noble example of Jacobean architecture, and we should go a long way before we could find anything so good in character and detail as the noble frontage which is seen so well in the picture. The lozenge brick contrasted with the mellow stone has a superb effect. Notice the beauty of the doorway, with its coupled columns, fluted and enriched, rising to the admirable oriel window of the upper floor, which is adorned below with the shields of the Warburtons and Egertons, and above with a perforated cresting. Then, higher still, upon pedestals, heraldic animals are seated, each with a banneret, while above rises the rich and beautiful octagonal turret with its fretted cupola. The flanking wall on either side, with mullioned windows and bays, curvilinear gables above, and excellent chimneys, complete an architectural composition, seen admirably in light and shade in the picture, which it would be hard to surpass. There are details which remind us of the Hall at Bradford-on-Avon, and of other choice examples of the style. The terrace wall, all overgrown with ivy and other climbers, is seen, as well as the place of the old moat which is bridged; and when we remember that from this doorway we look out over the fair garden, where the kneeling slave holds up the dial, to the radiant flower borders, and to the glorious yew and ilex walk, we shall see how superb is the effect. The same architectural character

We do not know where better things have been wrought. The elements of the style, nevertheless, are simple, the happiest use being made in bold forms and subtle contrasts of ilex and yew, united with gorgeous colonies of herbaceous plants which are radiant all the summer long. The yew and ilex walk leading out to the umbrageous spaces of the park is of rare and singular character, affording a delightful excursion into the quaint world of topiary art. There is no evergreen that puts forth a fresher or more distinctive green than the ilex in the spring, and the conical forms into which it is deftly shaped at Arley are in beautiful contrast with blocks of the deeper-hued yew. And yet the yew, too, is "kindled at the tips," and we feel that in this singular avenue we are in company with a host of quaint and attractive garden inhabitants.

Note again the extraordinary beauty of the Alcove Walk. From that beautiful over-arched shelter, which is vested with climbing plants, what a glorious picture is disclosed! On one side is a tall brick wall, with a gateway through it to another garden, a marvel of ironwork, and clinging growths of evergreens and flowering plants clothe the wall in many places, which, moreover, is supported, as it were, by magnificent buttresses of yew. These are an original feature, and form most excellent examples of the topiary style, being cut and kept by very skilful hands.

More satisfactory work of the kind we have never seen. Facing the wall of brick is a magnificent wall of yew, and again there are buttresses which play an important part in the design. For, though they are buttresses in form, they are in effect intended to back up and give relief and contrast to the glorious flower-borders. We cannot speak too highly of the taste and skill with which this Arbour Walk is formed. The contrast between the dark yew, the fresh green of the grass, and the radiant colonies of hardy flowers is most admirable. Larkspurs and foxgloves, poppies and phloxes, snapdragons and lupins—these and a crowd of other glorious flowers are grouped in lovely colonies; tall-growing queenly spires and tufted masses, keeping up the tale of garden glory from early spring until the blasts of autumn have blown. The yew garden, with its picturesque little tea-house of timber and brick, all fenced in by its high walls of sombre green, is a delight to linger in, and is a world of quaintness of its own. There are more open gardens on the east, near the chapel, well kept and beautiful, with a background of cedar and many ornamental and forest trees. In short, look where we will, we are charmed with the garden-beauty of Arley Hall—a place dearly loved, richly prized, and much beautified by its possessor, and one where we find also architectural triumphs united with the historic memories of a long and distinguished line of good Englishmen.



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THE STABLES.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

is on the garden and chapel front, where the detail is equally beautiful, and the grouping for light and shade even better, as may be seen in the picture. The character of the chapel is admirably displayed. It was designed by Salvin in 1845, the north aisle being added by Street in 1856-57, and is a most successful example of the Late Decorated style, with rich curvilinear tracery and pinnacled and angled buttresses. The day of the moat, drawbridge, and portcullis having long passed away, Mr. Egerton-Warburton placed above his doorway a hospitable motto, reminiscent of those at Montacute and many other places:

"This gate is free to all good men and true;  
Right welcome thou, if worthy to pass through."

Although the interior of the house is not illustrated, it may be interesting to say that on the south front are the library, hall, and gallery, the latter 60ft. in extent, and wainscoted with oak grown on the estate. The magnificent drawing-room is on the east side, overlooking the terrace garden, and the dining-room, which was the old hall of the timber mansion, is on the same side.

And now it remains to speak of the glorious gardenage which has enframed this noble abode with surroundings which few, if any, can excel. The neighbouring district is generally flat, but it slopes on the east side of the mansion towards a considerable sheet of water and handsome plantations, the house standing comparatively high, looking over a richly-wooded country, not without variety, and with a prospect in one direction of the Macclesfield and Staffordshire hills. The pictures of the garden will interest and astonish every lover of the gardener's art, for they are a triumph both in design and execution.

## THE JOY OF LIFE.

THERE is a sweetness about these words, a wild freshness as of the morning. For they are woven of the spell of Youth, and Beauty, and Love. They breathe the Heart's Desire, the Soul's Delight. They are clothed with a glory of sunlight, a grace of Spring; they walk in fair green places; they shine with the tender light of stars; they wreath themselves into white voluptuous shapes; they throb with the pulse of sweet remembered kisses; they tingle with the touch of Love's unloosened tresses; they fling roses riotously; they have a perfume of trailing robes, a gleam of deep still waters; their lips are crimson with the wine of dreams; they laugh, and dance, and sing. They are an Echo, a wandering voice from golden ages when the world was young, when shepherds piped on the pleasant hills of Arcady, when Beauty bathed in Tempi's azure waters, when Youth was crowned with roses, Love with song, when Gods and Graces walked upon the Earth. For it is in the pages of a heathen mythology, in the faded manuscripts of the old Greek rhapsodists, that the Joy of Life lives for ever, breathing rich airs, wafting sweet odours, as from some undiscovered country of the Heart's Desire. It is as though the intoxication of some sun-mellowed vintage was on them while they wrote, as though they had dipped their pens in the fierce fires of Spring, in the blood of roses, in the golden chalice of morning. And they of the tired brain, and bitter



heart, to whom the Joy of Life has never come, or from whom it has long since parted—reading in those magic pages, are conscious of a longing for they scarce know what, for the freshness of morning skies, for the perfumes of flowers, for the sound of music, for the sweet, wild pulse of youth, for the madness of Love's first kisses. For to all those who have drunk deep of the lyric sweetness of ancient Greece, it would seem that the Joy of Life had been breathed and sung once and for ever by the singers of those enchanted islands, whose God was Beauty and whose Glory Song. They have left us a basket of culled flowers from whose petals the pearls of morning are still unshaken, and whose fragrance is still a rapture. And so strong is it, so sweet, that it brings the blood to the face, and makes the pulses beat. It is as though a trumpet sounded in our ears blown by the rosy lips of Morning, a viol touched by the jewelled hands of Spring. Beauty walks before us, warm, incarnate, glowing, red as roses, white as lilies. Her brows are bound with Youth's fair garlands, and her tresses sweep the ground. Her bosom is the throne of Love, and desire looks from her eyes. We follow through Elysian fields, enchanted valleys, we breathe delicious airs, we stand by far-off seas, whose deep blue waters lap a golden shore. But the Joy of Life, the joy of merely living, breathing, being, so deeply felt, and beautifully expressed by the old Greek lyrists, seems to have passed away with those great and glorious days, embalmed though it be in the sweetness of their song, and the magic of their music. And yet may be, it is a purer, a deeper, a more perfect thing in the hearts, and on the lips, of our sweetest singers than it was in those old pagan days that glorified the delights of the senses, and the desire of the eye. And this difference is not merely due to the fact that the Greek lived in a land of roses and nightingales. We have Love's flowers and Love's song-bird too—it goes deeper than this, it is a difference not so much physical as spiritual. And though the Joy of Life has lost her sweet and luscious girlhood, though her white limbs are draped, and her hair no longer floats upon the wind, yet into her eyes has come a light divine and pure, a depth of far-off dreams, a grace of stainless womanhood; she moves with slow and queenly steps, her tresses shade the forehead of a Saint. She is no longer to be touched and held, to be lewdly kissed, and roughly embraced, but dimly imagined, and faintly breathed, worshipped with down-cast eyes, and inward prayer. She is of Silence, the silence of the soul.

And though as of old she wakens at the voice of Morning and the step of Spring, at Beauty's perfect face, and shape divine, yet

there awakens, too, something that is not merely joy, something far-off, and sweet, unseen, intangible. For there is no joy of this world that is not also of the world to come. The joys of youth, of love, the worship of loveliness, are they not deepest in those larger minds that dwell beyond the stars?

The material mind knows not joy, because joy is not pleasure, and the materialist knows only pleasure. And the materialism of to-day lacks the riotous pulse, the reckless abandon, the passionate adoration of Beauty and Nature, that made the songs of the old Greek Sensualists so sweet. It is without the passions of the heart, as well as the ecstasy of the soul. To eat and drink, to go to sleep, to die! Who shall sing to such deaf ears as these? Not Joy, not the Seraph of Morning, the Angel of Light. Youth wanders through the garden of Life, eating only of the fruits that cloy and sicken, and so grows old before his time; grows old and sad, and desolate, and dies.

Oh fools and blind! For Joy has called to you, and ye have not heard, and smiled upon you, and ye have not seen.

She has played to you upon a harp of many strings, the inward music of the Heart's Delight. She has danced before you along the flowery paths of Spring; she has shed her perfumes upon you, her gracious airs, and virgin dew. She has looked at you with the eyes of Truth and Purity; she has whispered lovely things. She has clothed herself in the garments of Chastity and Honour; the mouth of Innocence sucketh at her breasts; the stars are in her hair, and the dawn upon her brow; her voice is as the clarion of Heaven—Rejoice, rejoice!

It is a sweet and precious thought that this Joy of Life, this ambrosia on which the soul feeds in its imprisoned state, shall in eternity be life's only food and drink, when to breathe the pure air shall be bread enough; and to drink its perfume wine enough; when Love shall mingle only as the wind mingles with the odour of a flower, or one cloud of glory with another.

I stood upon a hill looking for the coming of morning.

I saw Aurora's face looking through the windows of her Eastern palaces. I saw her put off the gauzy veil that hid her beauty, and stand forth rosy—glowing, glorious. The wind was a psalm of gladness, and the air a rapture of perfume. My soul stirred within me, my spirit spread wide wings of freedom. It was uplifted to the azure spaces. Celestial dew glittered like stars upon its feathers; it hung in the stainless ether. The buoyant winds bore it ever higher, higher; it sang like a lark at the gates of Heaven. I watched it out of sight.

The Joy of Morning! the Joy of Life! R. G. T. COVENTRY.

## A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

THE Renaissance in England was the starting point of modern life. It bore and bred the men who made the Empire, those who laid the foundation of dominion beyond her narrow seas, and those still greater who opened up a wider kingdom, where man saw the possibilities of the intellectual world as he had never before done. It seemed as if a long obscured sun of imagination and high thought broke through the clouds of mediæval limitations, and woke the genius of a whole people. Liberty of mind, of soul; liberty to expand physically and mentally asserted itself in the national existence. Like a spiritual Nile, the tide of the Renaissance, reaching our shores, flooded the barren land and quickened growth in every direction. The two discoveries—the New World as an outlet to ambition and enterprise, and that other world of literature—reacted on each other and inspired their further developments.

Mr. Sidney Lee, very competent to deal with the spacious Elizabethan era, has given us a fine study of *Great Englishmen of the Sixteenth Century* (Constable). Only one of the six Englishmen chosen is pre-Elizabeth—Sir Thomas More. The names of the others, in the words of one of them, "stir the heart like a trumpet"—Shakespeare, Sidney, Spenser, Raleigh, and Bacon. Perhaps we except one from that thrilling list, him who held that knowledge was the only power, and who has failed to win that feeling of personal affection and admiration which we yield to the others—Francis Bacon.

In a most excellent introductory chapter Mr. Lee endeavours to represent the impetuous, brilliant, universal spirit which dominated the sixteenth century. An ideal of a strange and unrealisable catholicism is observable in all true spirits of the Renaissance. There was no tract of knowledge, no wild theory, no wilder practice not permissible to their imagination and their endeavour. Poets and scholars must also be warriors and discoverers; in the active and in the reflective sphere the energy and genius of man must be tried. It is wonderful what they did do. Shakespeare's catholicity of knowledge and sentiment was extended in a less degree to his peers. Leonardo da Vinci was a poet, a painter, an engineer, and mathematician. Raleigh was a writer, an explorer, a soldier—what was he not?—and we find his numberless activities reflected in the lives of many of his

contemporaries. Sir Philip Sidney held that poetry was the rightful "companion of camps." It was a multifarious knowledge and experience men sought. The intellectual and physical worlds were displaying new continents on every side, and a versatile genius, such as will never light our race again, was throwing itself eagerly into the capture of both. Greek literature and philosophy in a revival movement had spread through Italy and other countries to England. An enlightened Protestantism woke with the Renaissance; printing was invented, and the Bible became a study at first hand, so that there was mingled with the beauty of Hellenism the sublime Hebrew prophecy and song; Copernicus made his great discovery, and maritime exploration widened the borders of a narrow world. It was not the truth of the solar system, nor the contributions to geography merely that helped the effect of the intellectual movement. As Mr. Lee finely says: "They were levers to lift the spirit of man into unlooked-for altitudes. . . . Dreamers believed that a new universe had been born, and that they were destined to begin a new manner of human life, which should be freed from the defects of the old. . . . The unveiling of the measureless expanse of physical nature made of man, physically considered, a pigmy; but the spirited enterprises whereby the new knowledge was gained, combined, with the revelation of the intellectual achievements of the past, to generate the new faith that there lurked in man's mind a power which would ultimately yield him mastery of all the hidden forces of animate and inanimate nature."

These biographies are not only excellently done, but they have a personal and original note betokening the author's own research and opinions. The one dealing with Sir Philip Sidney we feel bound to linger over. It conveys an almost perfect picture of that name of names which England has cherished when many wiser and more learned have disappeared. Over Raleigh's tomb we can say, pitifully summing up that heroic and mistaken spirit, "O eloquent, just, and mighty Death, thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty, and ambition of man," but the falling star of Sidney's life stirs again the grief that filled Elizabethan England with lament. A soldier, a politician, a courtier, a poet, a critic, "he ranks with the heroes who have promised more than they have performed, with the pathetic sharers of 'unfulfilled

renown." When we consider that thirty-two years were the span of Sidney's life, it is surprising that, with the wide distribution of his talents, he should yet have left a mark on English literature. Mr. Lee reckons his "Apologie for Poetrie" a piece of "reasoned enlightenment" unprecedented in England. His sonnets to Stella, modelled on Petrarch's, certainly founded our English sonnet, and particularly paved the way for Shakespeare's sonnetteering achievement. We fancy it is rather a new idea that Mr. Lee gives expression to when he refers to Sidney's "literary relations" with Lady Rich, the Stella of the sonnets. But it is not Sidney's life and his actual accomplishment that have made his memory. It was the genius of his personality. There were over two hundred laments written at his death—from Spenser's "Astrophel," downwards. While still a youth the dying Earl of Essex, father of Lady Rich, who longed for him as a son-in-law, gave his last speech to praise of Sidney. "I call him son—he is so wise, virtuous, and godly. If he go on in the course he hath begun, he will be as famous and worthy a gentleman as ever England bred." To be friend of Sidney, to be connected with him in any way, to dedicate a book to him, was sufficient fame. From "the contagion of the world's slow stain," from Elizabeth's fickleness, from mire of politics and favours, he rested securely after that last revelation of himself on the field of Zutphen. A loving immortality has been thrown over his brief and beautiful career. That mourning procession to St. Paul's deemed him England's greatest loss, and to-day the fairest traditions of our country shine with the name of Sir Philip Sidney.

What will the followers of Mrs. Delia Bacon say to the dignified superiority of our learned Shakespearian authority: "An illogical tendency has of late years developed in undisciplined minds to detect in Bacon and Shakespeare a single personality. One has heard of brains which, when subjected to certain excitements, cause their possessors to see double, to see two objects when only one is in view; but it is equal proof of unstable, unsteady intellectual balance, which leads a man or woman to see single, to see one individuality when they are in the presence of two individualities, each definite and distinct"? In regard to Bacon's paraphrase of "Certaine Psalmes," there is a note of exultation even amid the soberness of Mr. Lee's estimates. "If a reader of that volume be not promptly disabused of the heresy that any Shakespearian touch is discernible in the clumsy and crude doggerel, he deserves to be condemned to pass the rest of his days with no other literary company to minister to his literary cravings than this 'Translation of Certaine Psalmes into English Verse, by the Right Honourable Francis Lo. Verulam, Viscount St. Alban.'"

Perhaps we may be wrong, but it seems as if there were just a hint of depreciation of Bacon, an intentional belittling. No one could approach in any small spirit Bacon's great gifts to the world; but his life and character, and the materialism that overlay his idealism, are reviewed with no tender eye. "In feature Bacon closely resembled his stern-complexioned mother, and, although her sour pietism did not descend to him, her love of literature, as well as the resolute self-esteem which her creed harboured in her, was woven into the web of his character. Her great learning and scholarship were of the true Renaissance type; she was at home in most of the classical and post-classical authors of Greece and Rome." Bacon is referred to throughout with a rigorous justice. He was never a good judge of men; he turned his back to the smiter in a paroxysm of fear; his moral sense was too weak; his pusillanimity; with characteristic insensibility; with characteristic perversity—these are a few of the phrases in which he is described. Self-advancement was perhaps his aim, but—"for my name and memory I leave it to men's charitable speeches, and to foreign nations and the next ages."

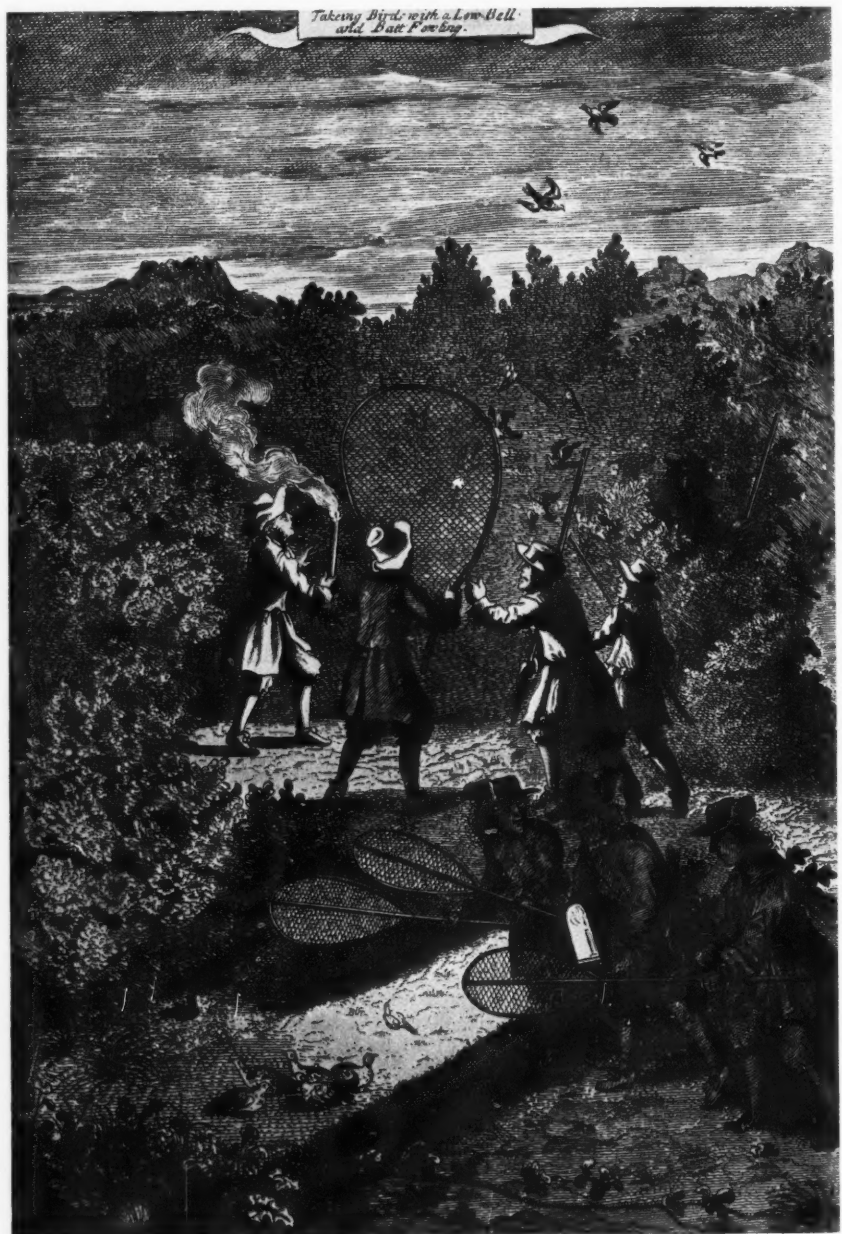
We cannot refer to the final life, that of Shakespeare. There Mr. Lee is pre-eminent and beyond reproach. Little criticism can be passed on these eloquent series of lives that seem to have been written with the sacred purpose of bringing to Englishmen of to-day a sense of the nobility and worth, the sacrifice and endeavour, on which our great literature and our national spirit have been built. We are indebted to Mr. Lee for two lines from a virtually unknown poet of that day, who

cast one of his flowers on Shakespeare's tomb, which, pathetic and fragile, appeals to us for remembrance:

"Under this carved marble of thine own,  
Sleep, brave tragedian, Shakespeare, sleep alone."

## OLD NOCTURNAL . . . FIELD SPORTS.

PROBABLY there are many of our male readers who, in the days of their boyhood, were accustomed to pursue, during the dark nights of winter, the amusement of bat-fowling. At any rate, this was the case with the present writer, who had the luck to be brought up in a wild part of the country, where the hawthorn hedges were encouraged to grow as tall as possible, in order to provide the livestock with shelter. These hedges were an irresistible attraction to the birds that gathered to roost when the evening shadows began to fall, and they were splendidly adapted to the purpose of the bat-fowlers, who, in our case, never numbered more than three, and usually consisted of two youthful sportsmen, one of whom beat the lee side of the hedge, while the other carried a torch and a net. It was a pastime at once amusing and instructive, and few people who had not experience of it would believe the great variety of birds that were thus taken. Some, of course, were in the hedgerow by accident, and occasionally it happened that a wounded bird had just been able to climb into a high bough. The other day, in looking over that pioneer of the sporting books of to-day, "The Gentleman's Recreation," we happened to turn up the sections of fowling devoted to nocturnal sport, and read them with curious interest. Before firearms had



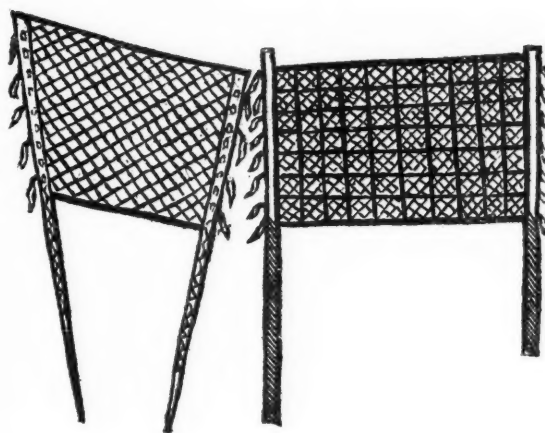
TAKEING BIRDS WITH A LOW-BELL, AND BAT-FOWLING.



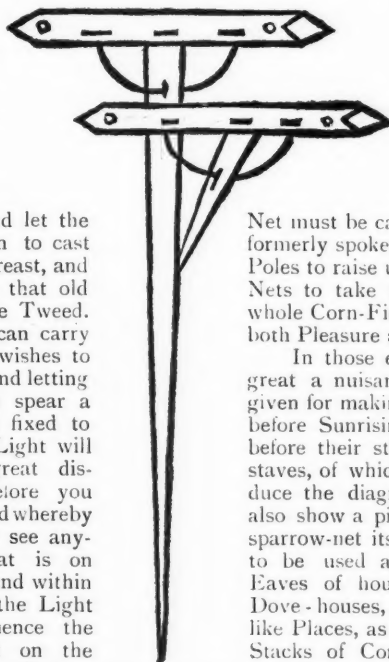
attained their present precision, it is evident that our forefathers had to resort to many devices for taking small birds which were required "to give them warm to your Hawks which is a great Nourishment and makes them Mew faster; or for a weak Person enough to make them some Broath." Some of the methods were closely akin to those of the poacher, as, for instance, the system of taking birds in the night with a fold net, of which we give an illustration. The writer tells us that the net has to be fixed on both sides to two strong, straight, and light poles, and two or three lusty men are needed to carry it, which they must do in silence. The lights, which used to be small bundles of straw set on fire, were carried "behind the Nets, in the midst of them, and about two yards from them." Then there had to be a beater on the other side of the hedge, who "must be armed with a good strong Pole and must lay on stoutly after the Signal is given, all which must be by some silent Shew." This method was pursued "by the sides of Hedges, Coppices, or the like, but not in them." The writer concludes thus: "In great Timber-Woods under which Holly-Bushes grow, there Birds do usually roost and where good store of Game may be found and by this Way twenty or thirty Dozen of Birds has been often taken in one Night." Even more popular was the plan for catching birds with Low-Bell, Net, and Light. This was a sport in season from the middle of October to the end of March, and was for "Plain and Champion-Countries also in Stubble fields." Those who were engaged in it usually started about nine o'clock at night, the air being mild and the moon not shining. The Bell used "must be of a deep and hollow Sound and of such a reasonable size that a man may carry it well in one hand; which toll just as a Sheep useth to do whilst it feedeth." The next requisite was a box "much like a large Lanthorn and about a Foot and a half square, big enough for two or three great Lights to be set in, and let the Box be lined with Tin and one side open to cast forth the Light." This was fixed on the breast, and we suppose it is some tradition concerning that old box which still guides the fish poacher on the Tweed. He, too, uses a box-like lantern, which he can carry against his breast, making it dark when he wishes to conceal his presence from the water-bailiffs, and letting the light flash forth when he is about to spear a salmon. The directions go on: "This Box fixed to your Breast to carry before you and the Light will

cast a great distance before you very broad whereby you may see anything that is on the Ground within the Compass of the Light and by Consequence the Birds that roost on the Ground." In our illustration it will be seen that three men are carrying this out in a most literal and practical manner. Concerning the bell, the author asks us to note "that the Sound of the Low-Bell doth cause the Birds to lie close, and not dare to stir while you put the Nets over them and the Light is so terrible to them that it amazeth them. And for caution you must use all imaginable Silence, for fear of raising them." This sport could be pursued in solitude. In that case "in one Hand carry the Low-Bell and in the other a Hand Net about two Foot broad and three Foot long with a Handle to it." This net you were to "lay upon them still as you espy them," and it can be gathered from the writer's tone that the solitary method was the more popular, but he wisely says, "your best Way is to try both and use that which liketh you best."

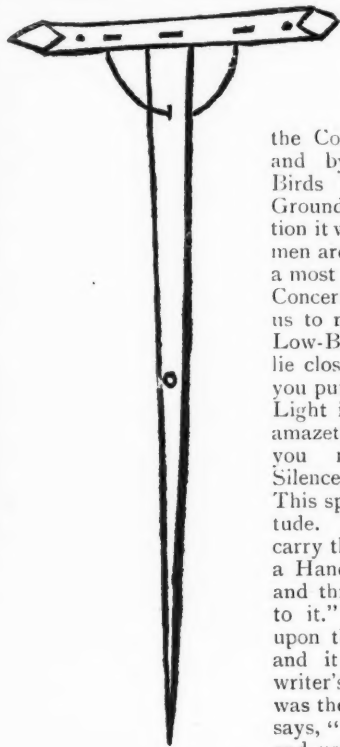
Bat-fowling proper was used on



THE FOLD NET.



THE STAVES JOINED.

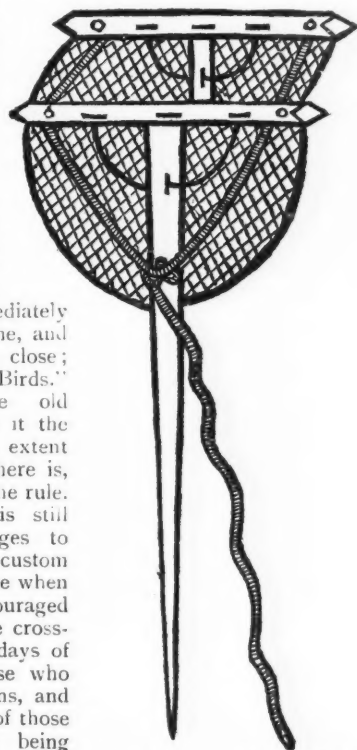


THE CROSS STAFF.

"Shrubs, Bushes, Hawthorn Trees, and the like Places." It was not always used with nets, but instead, "a Third-part of the company must attend upon the said Fires with long Poles, rough and bushy at the upper Ends, to Knock down the Birds that fly above the Lights, and another Third-part must have long Poles to beat the Bushes and other Places, to cause the Birds to fly about the Lights which they'll do as if amaz'd, not departing from it; so that they may be knocked down at Pleasure. And thus you may spend as much of the Night as is dark and find good Diversion." What strikes us about bat-fowling is the size of the crowd, and, indeed, there are references in Fielding, and other of the eighteenth-century novelists, which show that a company

of bat-fowlers was usually a large one, and must have had an uncanny look prowling about the fields with their lights in the middle of the night. In addition to those we have mentioned the writer refers to others who carry small nets, something like a racket, to beat down the birds as they sit at roost, and lastly, there were those whose business is "to gather the Birds up and to put them into a Basket or Bag to carry home." He remarks, "a Cross-bow for this Sport is very useful to shoot them as they sit." His directions about the "Tramel-net" would suit the sportsman of to-day admirably: "There is another Way to take great and small Fowl by Night in Champion-Countries; and that is with a long Tramel-Net, which is much like the Net used for the Low-Bell, both for Shape, Bigness, and Mesh. This Net is to be spread upon the Ground, and let the nether or further End thereof (being Plumed with small Plummetts of Lead) lie loose on the Ground; and then bearing up the former End by the Strength of Men at the two foremost Ends, only trail it along the Ground, not suffering that End which is born up to come near the Ground, by at least a Yard. Then at each side of the Net must be carried great blazing Lights of Fire, such as were formerly spoken of; and by the Lights Men must be with long Poles to raise up the Birds as they go, and as they rise under the Nets to take them. And in this manner you may go over a whole Corn-Field, or other Champion-Ground, which will afford both Pleasure and Profit."

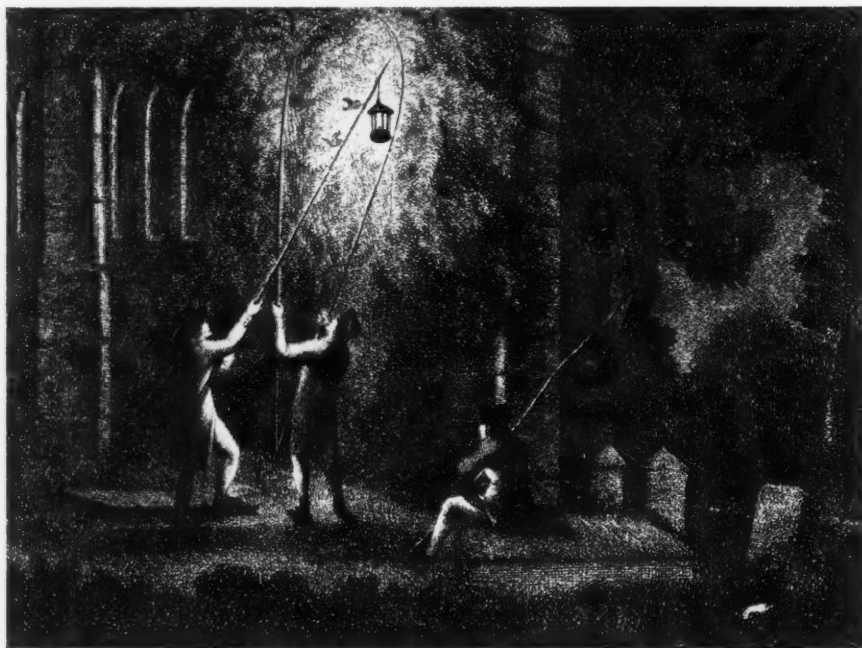
In those early days the sparrow appears to have been as great a nuisance as it is to-day, and elaborate directions are given for making the net, which is to be used "after Sunset and before Sunrising, being the times after the birds go to roost and before their stirring in the Morning." It was made with two staves, of which we reproduce the diagrams. We also show a picture of the sparrow-net itself. It was to be used against "the Eaves of houses, Barns, Dove-houses, and such-like Places, as also against Stacks of Corn or Hay; and if they were Thatched it were the better, and being set close against the same, making a Noise to force them to fly out into the Net, and immediately draw the long single Line, and shut up the Cross-Staves close; and so take out the Birds." Any reference to these old pastimes must bring with it the reflection that to a great extent they are discontinued. There is, however, one exception to the rule. On Christmas Day it is still customary in many villages to have a shooting match, the custom being a survival of the time when the yeomen were encouraged to show their skill with the cross-bow on all the great holidays of the year. Nowadays those who can afford it shoot pigeons, and we are afraid the number of those who have guns without being able to afford pigeons is a



A SPARROW-NET FIXED.



diminishing one. Up to twenty-five or thirty years ago there used to be in nearly every old village a curious collection of firearms, muzzle-loaders handed down from one generation to another; but since the passing of the Education Act the rural swain has given up many of his old recreations, and shooting is, we are afraid, one of them. However, Christmas Eve in the North used to be spent by certain people in what was practically bat-fowling, though they did not call it by that name; that is to say, in the netting of sparrows and other small birds that were to be utilised for the Christmas shoot. Even that



BAT-FOWLING.

custom is falling into desuetude, though the pigeon-shooting still survives.

It was a merry and innocent pastime for boys, perhaps one of its greatest attractions being that it was carried out during the night. There was all the preliminary excitement about getting the net ready and preparing the torch, for the torch, mark you, is a most important part of the outfit. How patiently have we in the old days unravelled a heavy farm rope which, dipped in a barrel full of tar, will blaze like an electric light. Then there was the walk to the field of operations, the favourite one in our time being a set of fine hill pasture, called the Generals. Here the hedgerows were allowed to grow extremely high, because of the exposure to which the fields were subjected. Equally in a snowstorm or on a hot summer day were you sure to find the sheep or cattle sheltering below the loose and gnarled branches. Of course, one had to know the country thoroughly to go bat-fowling in those lonely places in the dead dark of a December night. The blaze of the torch only seemed to make the darkness visible. It lay like a great thick wall round one, and the birds when beaten out of the hedges came fluttering in the most unsteady manner towards the light, a fact that once suggested a curious idea to a retired cit who had taken a place in the country. He came to the conclusion that, if other birds would fly to the light, so would pheasants and partridges, and he actually had contracts drawn up for building a permanent beacon or lighthouse, which he thought would act as a permanent game-trap, and attract the pheasants and partridges from all the neighbouring estates. The mere narration of this incident will, we imagine, be taken as a certificate of the fact that this man had amassed his shekels in the dim light of a counting-house, as such an idea would never have dawned on anyone else who was country bred.

## A CHRISTMAS PARTY.

IT was Christmas-time. Inside the Abbey Farm all was bustle, for that evening Mrs. Taplin's annual Christmas party was to be held, to which all the relations on both sides were invited. Ponto, the old pointer, who generally shared the hearth with the cat, had retired out of the turmoil to the stable, and the cat had taken refuge in the cellar. The farmhouse had once been an abbey, but very little of the original building remained save the great old kitchen, with its huge open fireplace and carved stone mantel above. The turkey was already on the spit, and Mrs. Taplin was busily engaged basting it when a face looked round the door. It was Ben Taplin, one of the nephews from a neighbouring farm, who had just looked in to see how things were going on.

Mrs. Taplin greeted him warmly: "Oh! Benny, I am glad to see you; for here am I with never a bit of Christmas, and everyone too busy to get any. Johnny's gone to town, and I'll only be back in time to dress; and he told me particular to have a mistletoe. So take the chopper, do, and go to the copse and get me some Christmas with as many berries on it as you can and a mistletoe."

Ben set off to the copse, whistling cheerfully. The path through it was white with snow, with only the track of a hare and a few birds' footmarks on it. All the long grasses by it were tumbled over thick with snow, and the bracken was heavy with it. There were the caw of rooks and the whistle of pigeons' wings flying out of the wood, and two jays were searching among the dead leaves in a spot which the trees had sheltered from snow. At the top of the path were some old twisted oak trees with mistletoe on them, and Ben took several branches crowded with milky berries. Then he plunged through the undergrowth to a secluded holly tree, off which he took an armful. Then he went back.

Already the short winter's day was waning. The sky was dark with more snow to come.

"It's going to snow again, Aunt," said Ben, as he entered the kitchen.

"Oh! dear, dear! I hope it won't stop the people coming," said Mrs. Taplin, anxiously.

"No fear!" replied Ben. "Where shall I put this?" he continued.

"Oh! anywhere you like," said Mrs. Taplin, abstractedly.

So Ben placed the holly about the walls, placed the mistletoe in a commanding position, and then left.

As night came on the wind rose again; the greyness of the sky became a livid darkness; the whole scene took on a weird whiteness in the failing light. A flight of starlings, which had been foraging far away, came back to roost in the ivy on the house and settled themselves in with piercing shrieks and chattering. Only the robins kept hopping forlornly about near the house, and the blackbirds answered one another in the copse. Presently a flake or two of snow began to float down again; others quickly followed, till at length everything was lost to sight in a whirling storm of white.

Inside the kitchen there was a roaring fire, and the room was full of the smell of turkey and sausages. The long table was spread with every kind of Christmas dainty. The two old bachelor uncles from a distance were the first to come. They walked straight in, and greeted their sister-in-law with a hearty kiss.

"I smelt the turkey as I come along," said John, the elder one; "and, thinks I, I'll follow my nose."

"'Tis regular Christmas weather, aint it?" said Mr. Taplin, rubbing his hands comfortably, as they divested themselves of their snowy great-coats and thick woollen gloves.

"Sure, yes it is. 'Tis snowen like billicums now, and blown a regular hurricane."

"Did you see anything of them coming?" asked Mrs. Taplin, nervously, "for the turkey is done to a T as it is."

"Yes, they're coming. I heard the traps behind me. You'll have plenty for your turkey, sister, sure enough!"

"Ah! I dare say there'll be pretty near enough to go round!" said Mr. Taplin. Mrs. Taplin smiled faintly. 'Twas well enough for father to have his joke, she thought—he hadn't got the cooking on his mind.

There was a sound of merry voices outside, and a clatter of boots having the snow knocked off them. Mr. Taplin hurried out, calling "Come in! Come in! For if it's cold without it's warm within!" And in came a whole company, the women so huddled up in shawls and wraps as to be scarcely distinguishable.

After a little conversation, Mr. Taplin began to exhort them to take their seats. "Here's a lad for every lass, and Uncle John for Maria Tye!" Maria Tye was a little, timid, tidy



"COUNTRY LIFE."

BERKELEY CASTLE; THE BOWLING GREEN.

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looking old woman, with a faded prettiness like a withered flower. Mr. Taplin always joked this couple, rather to Uncle John's alarm.

They all sat down and began supper, Mr. Taplin keeping a sharp look-out from the top of the table to call out directly he saw a plate empty. "Send up your plate! Send up your plate! There's mother'll never forgive you if you neglects her turkey!" Or with his head on one side and insinuatingly waving the carving-knife over the ham, "Have just a leetle shaven!"

Then, at last, the plum-pudding came in, enormous, round, and rich brown, with blue and yellow flames leaping up round it. "Now don't you give me such a big helping, brother," said one of the sisters; "'twas only last Christmas as ever was you gave me such a big bit I was uptipped for a week after."

"Pooh, pooh!" said Mr. Taplin. "Plum-pudden never hurt anybody as long as it's well boiled. Now you haven't had anything to-night, except the pudden," he said, at length with pride, "that isn't our own. The beef was from one of our own bullocks, the ham was from one of our own pigs, the turkey was of mother's rearen, and these apples and pears was from the garden!"

"And a very good dinner, too!" said Uncle John, approvingly.

"Ay! You'd think any dinner good if you was sitting by Maria!"

Presently the table was cleared and pushed out of the way. The older men gathered together and began to discuss crops and prices, while their wives in another little group talked of servants. Ben and one or two of the younger men slipped away.

A timid little knock sounded at the door, and Mrs. Taplin went and opened it. Outside in the darkness, with the snow-flakes whirling by, were four or five rosy-faced little boys with a lantern. "Come in out of the snow," said Mrs. Taplin, and they came bashfully just inside the door and began to sing in quavering lit:le voices "While Shepherds watched their Flocks by Night."

"Sing up, my boys," said Mr. Taplin, encouragingly, which had the effect of making them all stop; but finally they got started, and sang the hymn through. Then they sang another, and then the first one over again. After that Mr. Taplin brought out some pennies and gave them, and they sang with fervour "God bless all friends here, A Merry, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!" and departed.

A short time after there was another loud knock. "'Tis the Christmas Boys come to act," explained Mrs. Taplin.

"Ask them to step in, then," said Mr. Taplin.

Whereupon Mrs. Taplin flung wide open the big oak door, and there entered a "motley crew" of young men and boys in all sorts of costumes, some with blackened faces, Father Christmas in a long white beard, Scotch and English and Turkish knights, a soldier, a sailor, a captive Princess—all sorts of things were represented.

The proceedings opened by the Turkish Knight, easily identified as Ben, in spite of his blackened face, striding up and down and proclaiming: "Here come I a Turkish Knight, Come forth from foreign lands to fight!" The glow of the great fire dimmed the paler light of the candles, it roared up the chimney, burning with a clear flame and a deep red heart, it filled the room with warmth and ruddy light.

The queer old play (some of which dates back as far as the Middle Ages) went on with much fighting and killing in it.

"Don't our Ben act beautiful?" whispered his mother. "He falls down dead as natural as life!"

The audience sat round listening with rapt attention, as though they had never heard it before, instead of every Christmas of their lives. A good many allusions to "your good home-brewed beer" were worked into it, and towards the end Mrs. Taplin slipped out and came back with a tray of glasses and a big white jug with a hunting scene on it.

"Put a head on it," said Mr. Taplin, so Mrs. Taplin held the jug high, foaming the clear amber liquid into the glasses. Then, when healths had been drunk, the actors went away, and presently Ben and his friends reappeared with clean, shining faces. Some games and songs followed, and then began the business of cloaking and shawling, of parting glasses of whisky for the men, and hot elderberry wine for the women, Mr. Taplin begging them all to "take a good drink to keep the cold out!"

In the midst of this there was great amusement at Maria Tye being discovered innocently standing under the mistletoe. "Ah! she's waiting there for you, John!" called Mr. Taplin; whereupon John, who had laughed as much as anyone at first, became suddenly grave and said, "No, no, that was carrying a joke too far!"

At last all the horses were harnessed and the farewells said. The two old bachelors were the last to start, as they were the first to come. "Good turkey, yon!" said Uncle John, as he settled himself by his brother, who took the reins; and then he went off to sleep, only waking to mutter it again when the horse floundered more than usual in a snow-drift. Their lights flashed over the drifted hedges, standing out weirdly white against the

pitch-black sky above; all around was the soft, muffled stillness of a snowstorm, except when once and again came the strange cry of a flock of wild geese, flying high in the darkness above. "Good turkey, yon!" said Uncle John, again, waking up with a start as the horse stopped suddenly at his own gate.

K. HUGHES.

## A RETROSPECT.

HOW little the water has altered since we used to fish in five-and-twenty years ago! True, the river then seemed larger, when it filled, as perhaps it does still, our *beau idéal* of a trout-stream; but the old stump still protrudes its black head above the water, if not exactly in the same place, still in quite the same old way, and the little dipper sits upon it and sings as sweetly as of yore:

"Morn and eve the winter long  
You may hear the dipper's song,  
Soft and gentle, sweet and clear,  
Harken if you wish to hear."

So sings our dear old friend Matthew Gotterson, and what angler does not love the water-crow? Without him now, and the plaintive whistle of the sand-piper in spring, the water-side would seem almost melancholy. Though the willow bushes along the bank are now thickest where formerly it was open water, the water-hens scurry off to them just as they used to do; and the curlew, too, we see is still frequenting that Weetwood field where years ago we used so often to stalk him in vain. In the dark top of one of the tall Scotch firs round the wooded corner there is still an old crow's nest, just the same as when, as a boy, we used to steal up to it to kick the trunk, while the old keeper stood ready to shoot the hen bird as she flew from the nest, and we afterwards climbed the tree for her eggs. We wonder how many corbies have been shot here since then; and yet the place is still resorted to year after year to nest in! We are lost in thoughts of this sort when a dabchick suddenly pops up in the middle of the water in front of us, and at our slightest movement as suddenly disappears again beneath the surface. Was it not close to this very spot that Harry killed one with his catapult in the days when we used to go water-hen-hunting a long time ago, and when we were all so much interested in the curiously-shaped, partially-webbed feet of almost the first grebe that as boys we had handled? A great grey heron comes flapping heavily overhead, heralding his approach by a hoarse cackle, and flops down on a sandy beach by the river's edge, but catching sight of us flies off to the middle of a ploughed field, where he is quite unapproachable within gunshot, but where we recollect more than one of his ancestors having fallen to stratagem and a rook-rifle. The field is sheltered from the wind by the hill behind, with a sunny exposure, and has always been a favourite resort of herons for their midday siesta, and we suppose will continue to be so as long as the river flows.

Towards the gloaming, long straggling strings of rooks begin to pass overhead on their way home to their winter roosting-place in Trickle Wood. They fly in just the same line as they always used to do, and at a like elevation, and make deviations in their course and circle round and round in just the same old way. As children we used to wonder where they all came from every afternoon, and why they always took the same journey without sometimes staying nearer home for a day or two. We are here more than a mile from their roosting-place "as the crow flies," and from the height at which the rooks pass they may have come several miles already. We suppose the same reasons prompt them still as influenced their forbears years ago. Or have they yet amongst their ranks some old veterans who were alive in the seventies, and who act as guides? Is it not the immortal Shakespeare who speaks of "the many-wintered crow who leads the cawing rookery home"? Be that as it may, they keep exactly in the old course, and stick to their old customs, and every here and there a jackdaw or two may still be distinguished amongst the rooks by their smaller size and more pigeon-like flight, as well as from their noisy cries. There are, however, we fancy, more jackdaws now than there used to be. Another bird which has become more numerous during the last twenty years is the starling. He was always present in little parties of five or six about sunset on the tops of the tall poplars, where he made much twittering before retiring for the night to the pigeon-ducket or other secure roosting-place; but now he seems to congregate in dozens, and far more tree tops are occupied than before. And in our walk by the river-side we see that there is scarcely a broken branch, or a hole in the old willows, that has not been tenanted by them during the nesting season.

On the sand and mud banks by the water's edge, many prints of the otter's foot are visible. There have evidently been a pair of them hunting the river together, a large and a smaller one, as shown by their tracks. Will they still haunt the old hollow bank yonder under the roots of the willow tree, as in the days of long ago, when poor old Gallon used to hunt this water? We fancy so, for the holt looks as inviting as ever, and the



old tree hangs athwart the pool just as he used to. Several of the elms and beeches which once stood beside him have disappeared—been gradually undermined by floods and swept away—but the old willow, though perhaps a trifle more slanting than he used to be—bowed down a little by the last score of years added to his old age—has his roots thrown far back into the bank, and still hangs on. Twenty years ago it seemed to be a question of only a few years before a flood would get the better of him, and pull him into the channel; but he stands there yet, for all that, and twenty years hence, if we live to see it, he will as likely as not look just the same as he looks now—an elderly tree, rather past

his prime, and apparently tottering to his fall; but that fall may not come for another fifty years, perhaps longer. And who shall say how long it is since he was a sapling! How did the river flow then, and who was then his owner? And how often has an owner, in lopping off some branch which interfered with a favourite cast, perhaps even contemplated cutting the tree down, lest he should fall into and divert the course of the stream? The owners, several of them, have gone, but the old tree is standing still! Almost might we paraphrase Ovid's oft-quoted lines and make him say, "*Omnia mutantur, sed nos non mutamur in illis.*"

LICHEN GREY.

## EXPERIENCE OF POULTRY-FARMING.

THE fact that 160,000 tons of eggs were imported into England from Russia this year alone, apart from the enormous quantities shipped by Denmark and France, raises the oft-mooted question yet once again "Does poultry-farming in England pay?" I maintain most emphatically that it does pay, and, if properly understood, pays well.

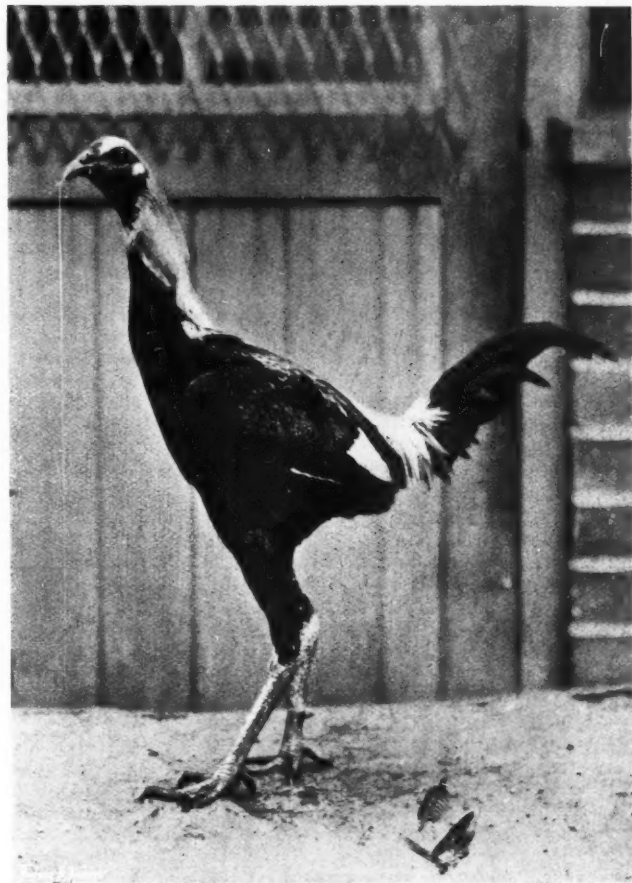
I will place facts and figures before you, taken from practical experience, that you may judge of this yourself. Why should we not be able to compete with other European countries? Why should we be content to sink into the background and be supplied wholesale by these other countries with poultry and eggs? Climate has nothing to do with it, for, with ordinary care during the winter, there is no difficulty in raising poultry for table and producing eggs all the year round, as I shall endeavour to show you.

I resolved three years ago to sink the small sum of £250 and give my whole attention to the working of a small poultry farm. I secured a little cottage, delightfully situated in the midst of fields, about ten minutes' walk from a most picturesque village, under a mile from a main line station, and between sixty and seventy miles from London. There were also several large market towns within easy access. I had ample ground for my purpose, also orchard and kitchen garden. Plenty of out-houses and sheds, and the run of a twelve-acre meadow in front, and an orchard of about nine acres at the side, completed my accommodation. Add to this an unlimited supply of good fresh water, and that I paid the moderate rent of £25 per annum, all inclusive, I started under decidedly advantageous conditions.

I firstly procured four second-hand incubators, two of 100 and two of sixty egg capacity, then two foster-mothers of a well-known maker. These latter proved rather expensive, as each incubator needs three foster-mothers to bring up the successive broods in heated atmosphere until they are old enough to dispense with it. I therefore called a local carpenter to my aid, who built me all necessary houses as I required them, and at a moderate charge. These I designed myself, and tarred, painted, and whitewashed same in my spare time.

I now filled my incubators with the best eggs I could procure—through the medium of a well-known poultry journal—buff Orpingtons for egg producers and game cross for table. The former proved excellent layers, especially during the winter months, and the latter were fit for killing at twelve to fourteen weeks, and were deliciously succulent and tender.

The incubators once started only required the usual morning and evening attention, with an occasional glance at the thermometers; this latter especially towards the fourteenth day, when



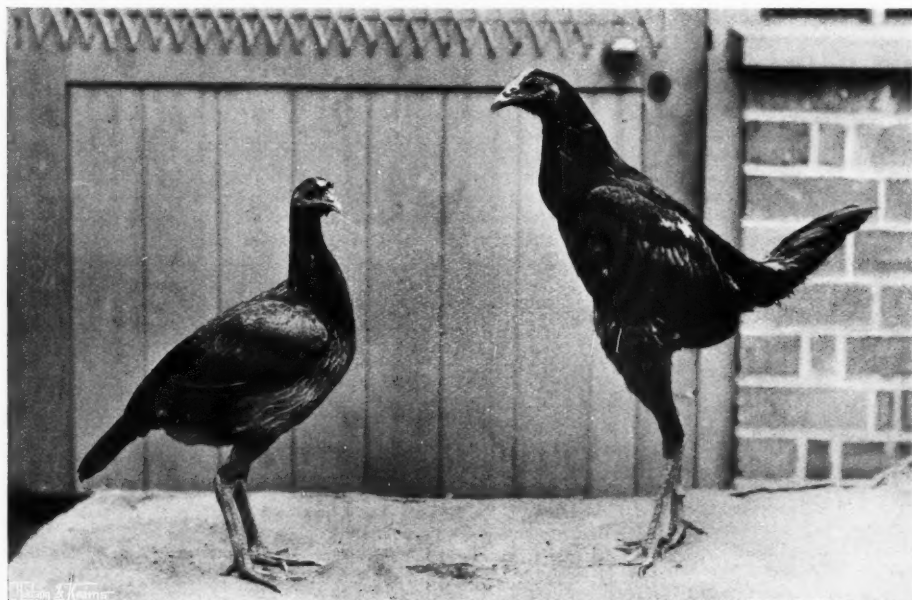
C. Reid.

DUCKWING GAME COCK.

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temperatures rise. Also during changeable weather I found this necessary. The fifth day I tested all eggs by means of a testing lamp, discarding all weak germs and clear eggs. I invariably worked the incubators at 104deg., and during hatching periods lowered the temperature to 102deg. I now had time, during the three weeks of incubation, to get my garden in order, and to prepare foster-mothers, food appliances, etc., in the orchard, which I converted into my nursery. One fact is worthy of notice—that the fresher the eggs the shorter the period of incubation and the stronger are the chicks. My experience of artificially-hatched birds is that they are hardier, more independent, less prone to disease, and particularly free from vermin.

From the 320 eggs placed in incubators on January 8th I hatched out 240 chicks on the 28th inst., which after twenty-four hours in the drying-boxes—attached to incubators—were all housed in their respective foster-mothers in the orchard. I fed solely on dry chick food, taking care to remove all feeding-troughs after each meal. After the third day they were supplied with drinking-fountains. They were fed the first week every three hours, after that three times a day until they were nine weeks old, when they were moved into roomy fowl-houses without perches. The floors of these were thickly laid with



C. Reid, Wishaw, N.B.

GAME FOWL.

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sawdust—which the local carpenter was glad to be rid of—and well turned over and raked every morning. Plenty of fresh water was always given four and five times a day, and all drinking-vessels filled at night after last feed. The foster-mother lamps were trimmed and refilled every day.

My plan, which I carried out systematically, was to keep the incubators going all through the year, so that each month my stock increased regularly. After each hatch the incubators were all cleaned, refilled, and disinfected, and restarted generally about three days after, so that in this way my work was cut out in the hatching-room, nursery, and, later on, in the front meadow, where the older birds had free run. During the early months of the year I used two incubators for ducks and geese, which hatched out very successfully, and proved very little trouble and very profitable. Ducks and geese I kept on a piece of meadow-land adjoining a pond, at the back of the cottage, so that they were all together and labour was economised. They were fed on barley meal, skimmed milk, and fat refuse. Ducks are very easily reared and are not subject to many diseases. Cramp is their worst enemy. Geese require no feeding, but live on grass until Michaelmas. I usually sold them then, for to fatten for Christmas was an expensive business and did not pay for the extra outlay.

As my birds left the nursery, my houses in the meadow were increased, and were so constructed that they were easily moved from one place to another, so that the grass was always sweetened again. I fed these fowls on wheat, oats, and mixed grain, alternate weeks. In the winter, three times daily. At 7 a.m., on barley meal, topping, and potatoes warm. At twelve o'clock, grain, in small quantity and plenty of green food, such as cabbage, lettuce, chicory, etc., which I grew plentifully for their special benefit; and at 4 p.m. on wheat. Twice a week I fed all the matured birds with green bone-food, namely, fresh bones and meat, ground together, which I procured at trifling cost from the butcher. I made a point of punctuality with all feeding processes. Another great thing for the well-being of all poultry is extreme cleanliness. All my houses were thoroughly raked over every morning, and well ventilated all day until dusk. Plenty of grit, cinders, and road dust were always at hand. I also took special care that all drinking-vessels were clean and always filled several times a day. In summer, I fed once, and that at 2 p.m. They picked up their own meals. At first I was able to manage without help; but, when my stock increased so steadily, I took on a lad at 4s. 6d. a week, who helped generally and did all the plucking necessary. I was fortunate in having a large private *clientèle*, whom I supplied with weekly hampers of eggs, poultry, and vegetables. At the commencement of May I had 869 birds, after having deducted for mortality. I started killing birds for table at the rate of ten a week, which number increased as time went on. I had no difficulty in disposing of eggs in any quantities, also fowls, ducks, and geese at fair market prices. My January pullets started laying at barely five months, and with each successive month a fresh lot followed on; so I had birds actually laying all the year round. With a covered shelter and plenty of straw, my winter supply of eggs was always plentiful. As to diseases and epidemics, I, fortunately, had no acquaintance with these enemies. Personally, I think these are greatly caused by impure water, want of cleanliness, and poor feeding, and greatly by mixing strange birds from unknown pens with your own stock. I rarely doctored young chicks, but put them out of their misery at once when they drooped. You see now my reason for incubating all my stock. I give my first year's balance-sheet for your guidance:

EXPENDITURE.			RECEIPTS.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Food ... ..	300	0 0	Fowls (1,040) @ 3s.	156	0 0
Eggs for incubation ...	50	0 0	Ducks (100) @ 2s. 9d.	13	15 0
Rent ... ..	25	0 0	Goslings (54) @ 6s.	16	4 0
Incubators ... ..	8	0 0	Eggs (30,000) @ 1d.	125	0 0
Foster-mothers (16) ...	21	10 0	" (20,000) @ 1½d.	125	0 0
Fowl-houses (12) ...	15	0 0			
Stock (ducks and geese)	3	0 0		£435	19 0
Egg-boxes and hampers	10	0 0			
Petroleum ... ..	8	0 0			
Repairs ... ..	5	0 0			
Paint, tar, whitewash,					
etc. ... ..	5	0 0	Chickens (746) @ 2s.	74	12 0
Labour ... ..	13	0 0	Ducks (8) @ 5s.	2	0 0
Sundries ... ..	5	0 0	Geese (4) @ 7s.	1	8 0
			Plant ... ..	20	0 0
	£468	10 0		£533	19 0
			Expenditure	£468	10 0
			Profit	£65	9 0

I don't take garden expenses into account, as the vegetables sold amply repaid all outlay.

The second and third years my egg produce increased, likewise the number of my clients. Bear in mind, I constantly worked on the same lines as the first year, so you can draw your conclusions as to profits therefrom. Of course, this life is not "unalloyed bliss." It means constant work, in all weathers,

late and early, plenty of energy, forethought, and minute attention. Let no one take up this occupation if he is not prepared to devote himself heart and soul to the work. Let his constitution be fitted to stand the wear and tear, let him also start with some practical knowledge of the business, and the results are bound to be satisfactory. Let our farmers keep good breeds, instead of "barn-door fowls"—they cost no more to feed—and the mongrels will die out by degrees, and we shall get more eggs, and in time be able to dispense with stale, foreign produce.

After testing this business for three years, I sold the whole of my stock and plant, without any difficulty, at a very good profit.

RITA DETMOLD.

## THE HOLY HAY.

"The country-folk do hold this plant to be, in very truth, the hay that lay in the manger at Bethlehem. And though it were midwinter, the legend tells, it blossomed red."—Old Herbal.

Melchion, Gaspar, and Balthazar,  
Led aright by the beckoning star  
Come where the gazing shepherd is,  
I hear a *Maid* lullaby sing.

Come where the stable's shelter stands,  
A maiden holds in a mother's hands  
A young child wrapt in swaddling bands.  
Now hush thee, my heavenly King.

"Joseph, come rede me this thing," she said,  
"The hay that lies at my young son's head  
Hath blossomed new, as it were not dead,"  
I hear a *Maid* lullaby sing.

And he that stood with the feeding kine  
Answered Mary "Thy child divine  
Is come, and behold it for a sign."  
Now hush thee, my heavenly King.

Mary, O cradle thy young child low,  
The night has fallen, the great winds blow,  
And sheep are lost in the driving snow,  
And many are wandering.

God send, we all when he comes our way  
May know Christ's coming and bid him stay,  
May find new life like the Holy Hay  
And a soul's awakening.

PAMELA TENNANT.

## LITERARY NOTES.

IN *The Land of Bondage* Mr. John Bloundelle-Burton takes us back to the days of George II., and gives us a story full of incident and adventure. The first part of the book is concerned with the attempt made by Robert St. Amande to get rid of his nephew Gerald in order that he may succeed to his brother's title and estates. The attempt, however, fails, and Gerald, Viscount St. Amande, is just on the point of establishing his claim, when he is seized by the press-gang and put on board the *Namur* bound for the West Indies and North America. In the second part the narrative is taken up by Joyce Bampfyld of Virginia, and here we get a glimpse of a colonial plantation in the days before slavery was abolished, and when the hatred of the red man for the white was at its height. It would spoil the reader's enjoyment if we were to tell him by what stroke of fortune the young viscount and the Virginian girl become acquainted, and how Gerald St. Amande comes at last to his own, so we leave him to discover it for himself. There is plenty of life and vigour in the narrative, and the book is one of those which we find difficult to lay down when once it has been picked up.

Very useful as a book of reference is *Philip's New Handy General Atlas of the World* (The London Geographical Institute), edited by George Philip. There are in it more than 150 maps, plans, and diagrams, illustrating the physical, political, and commercial features of the different countries. There are also two interesting plates showing the national and mercantile flags, and the house flags and funnels. The maps are beautifully executed and very clear, and the work is altogether a very complete one.

It seems early days to issue a cheap edition of Robert Browning, but in the very tasteful series of volumes, called "The King's Poets" (The De La More Press), we have a very pretty edition of *Men and Women*, in two volumes. The only objectionable feature in our opinion is Mr. Basil Worsfold's introduction. It begins, "Browning has the ferility of the hybrid," as if he were a Shorthorn or a Shire, the fact on which the statement is founded being simply that he had a German ancestor on the maternal side. But quite apart from the question of good taste, the critical introduction is an eyesore. Unless the possessor of the book agreed with the somewhat uncritical panegyric, he would be offended every time he opened the volume. On the other hand, the table of chief dates in Browning's life and the bibliographical note are excellent and most useful. These volumes contain what is really the very best of Browning, and will form an exquisite little Christmas present to give to one of his admirers.

A very shrewd little book is *Cornerstones*, by Katharine Burrill (Dent), and not only the young person, for whom it is primarily intended, but also the "grown-up," will find pleasure in the pages of these essays, some of which appeared in *Chambers's Journal*. The authoress chooses such varied subjects as "The Garden of Friendship," "The Tears of Mr. Turveydrop," "Of Many Books," "Followers of Pepys," "Thursday's Bairs," and so on.



Through every page runs a vein of humour or a sparkle of mother-wit. There is no pretence to polished style, but for all that there is a *je ne sais quoi* about these little essays which makes one loth to lay down the book. Here is a characteristic passage on friends: "I sometimes think it is easier to find a sympathising friend than a rejoicing one. People are more ready to produce the walrus's pocket-handkerchief than to take down the fiddle and the bow and accompany our pæans of joy and thankfulness. It is wonderful with what equanimity we can support the troubles and sorrows of other people. . . . Fair-weather friends have a bad name. They are not nearly so aggravating as the friends who are only really happy when they are holding an umbrella over you."

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### FORWARD AWAY!

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—So many of your readers are "good men and true" to hounds that I feel sure they will be interested in a very successful picture which Mr. H. Barrett has been able to take of a gallant fox, who has left the covert with the very proper intention of leading the field a merry dance and saving his brush if he can. There's nothing like beginning young, and the little girl on her pony has evidently taken to heart the hunting maxims that her elders have already taught her, for she has pulled up her pony and is sitting as still as possible in order not to "head him back," although, no doubt, her little body is trembling with excitement all the time; aye and big people are excited too. One may be sitting carelessly in the saddle, talking and chatting and smoking, but, hark! "C-o-o-p! forward away!" and one deep note on the horn. The nearest fence may loom black and large, and there is a forbidding look about the timber in the corner; but "he who hesitates is lost." If you want to be "with them," make up your mind, sit down in your saddle, choose your own line, and never reflect on the chance of a spill. As the hounds come streaming across the road the little girl will see a glorious picture. Won't she be pleased to tell them at home that she saw the fox, and can't you hear her saying, "Oh! wait till I'm big!"—V.

### SIEGE AND STORM.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I noticed with great interest in your issue of last week a charmingly quaint and evidently authentic illustration of Japanese jousting, from which it is evident that our gallant allies had a chivalry all their own, and practised the very arts upon which our noble cavaliers prided themselves so much in the good old days. Perhaps, Mr. Editor, you might find a place for the old illustration of the sacking of Montargiro, which I am enabled to send you. It is taken from "La Venetia Edificata, Poema Eroico, Di Giulio Strozzi, Con Gli Argomati, Del Sig. Francesco Cortesi," which was published in 1624. The picture speaks for itself. The defenders of the fortress are being driven out; the good knight Alcemedonte has met with a warrior's death, and is laid upon his shield under a shady tree; and in the immediate foreground a stern combat is being waged between Rodicilla and Candace, and the hissing serpents which crown the helm of Candace remind one of the Gorgon's hair, though it must surely have been by the aid of artifices pertaining to "black magic" that they were enabled to spit forth such a terrible stream of fiery sparks against the adversary.—N.

### A TENNIS COURT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you or any of your readers be good enough to give me some hints on the construction of a hard tennis court? Is it a very difficult matter, and is it necessary to have professional aid? I should be most grateful for information on the subject, and also as to the probable cost—E. HUGHES, Burford, Oxon.

[By the enquiry about a "hard" tennis court we may presume that a gravel lawn tennis court is meant. If it is wished to have an asphalt floor, it would be almost necessary to have it laid by a professional. The gravel is, on the whole, more satisfactory, and can be laid by unskilled workmen



A L'OUTRANCE.

A general indication of the manner of laying such a court can be given, though details both of construction and of cost depend on the nature of the soil and the character of the gravel that is obtainable locally. The enquiry coming from Oxfordshire, it seems as if the soil might be likely to be either heavy or chalky. On a heavy soil, with holding clay, more drainage—that is to say, more depth of excavation before beginning to lay the gravel, would be required than on chalk. From 6in. to 9in. of excavation, according to the nature of the soil, should be sufficient, in the one case with a 3-in. and in the other a 6-in. layer of big rubble-stones the size of a fist and downward, of brick refuse, or anything that the neighbourhood affords most cheaply—overlaid in each case with 3in. of some kind of gravel sifted fine. Gravel of flint, from the chalk, will do, but it will require to be sifted a little finer than that sold for garden paths, and broken up limestone and sandstone will also do. In fact, any fine gravel, except "sea-beach," will serve well. In all cases the gravel must be rolled and rolled till a "surface," as the builders call it, is formed, and it is curious how little the court is affected by rain when once this "surface" is established. The sea-beach sometimes sold as garden-path gravel does not do for lawn tennis courts, for it never "binds" to make this kind of surface. If the ground has to be levelled out of a slope and much water comes in at the upper side, it may be advisable to run agricultural



BREAKING COVER.

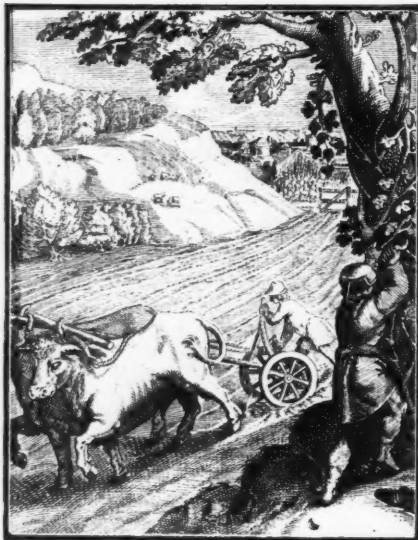


drain-pipes along the upper side and out at any convenient outlet, at the lowest depth of excavation, but with a good depth of rubble this is not likely to be necessary.—ED.]

#### TROUT INTRODUCED INTO MILL-PONDS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have lately been getting some experience in regard to the introduction of trout into mill-ponds and the like places that get their water supply by means of the diversion of a stream at a higher level than that of the pond itself; and in the hope that my experience may possibly be of use to others of your readers, I would request you, if you see fit, to publish this letter. It is, of course, very well known that at this time of year, whenever anything like a freshet comes down the stream which supplies the mill-pond, the fish will work a way out of the pond and up the streams to the gravels at the sources—or as near the sources as the height of water allows them to ascend—of the springs. This is well known, but what is not quite so well appreciated is the behaviour of the fish in descent from these spawning-beds. It is evident that when they come to the point at which some of the water of the stream is led off to form the mill-head and mill-pond they come to a parting of the ways. They may take one or the other, if both are open to them; but they are far less likely, other things being equal, to take the way of the mill-stream—for this reason. The mill-stream is artificially diverted in a channel having a less steep gradient than that of the natural stream. It is thus that the fall, which is the power, to turn the mill-wheel is obtained. The part of the stream, therefore, which runs its natural course is swifter, because steeper, than the mill-stream. Trout have a natural liking for a swift rather than a sluggish stream; also, a weak trout, in the spent condition after spawning, has a tendency to go in the direction of least effort, that is to say, that he is more likely to go down the natural than the artificial branch. This is, in point of fact, what happens in a great many cases of the introduction of trout into a typical mill-pond, or other piece of water similarly supplied; and much disappointment is experienced in consequence in finding that the trout which were there in the autumn are not there in the spring. The remedy is as plain as the reason—to erect a wire-net barrier across the natural channel at or near the dividing point of the streams. In the early months of the year few leaves and little flotsam of any kind are coming down the streams, so that there is less inconvenience in putting in a wire-net screen at this time than at any other, and it will have the effect of turning many a fish into the mill-pond which would otherwise have followed the natural course of the stream and never would have been seen again. I may add that even where no trout have been put into a mill-pond thus supplied, a screen thus placed in the early spring of the year, when the fish are descending, will have the effect of guiding into the pond many a fish that has come up the natural bed of the stream to spawn and has never previously had any acquaintance with the pond at all. But this is in certain cases a poaching method, for some lower proprietors may have a moral, if not a legal, claim on these fish.—H.



"AGRICULTURÆ BEATITUDO."

#### AN OLD EDITION OF HORACE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I enclose you herewith a copy of an old edition of Horace, published, as you will see, at Amsterdam, in 1683, for the sake of the illustrations, which seem to me both quaint and interesting. One is an illustration to the well-known ode, "Incipendum Aliquando," and the other to "Agriculturæ Beatitudo." They give such a very amusing version

of husbandry in old times, that I should think many of your readers would like to see them.—Z.

#### VENISON.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—With Christmas comes good cheer, and the old oak halls will resound with wassail and song and the merry carouse; dishes galore we still have served on the board, and the sacred rites of the mistletoe will doubtless be duly observed. But it seems to me that of late the lordly dish of "venison" has fallen somewhat from the repute in which it was formerly held—"A hart o' grease, my masters!"—and one can see the fat abbot of a wealthy monastery coming to inspect the noble victim, and the solemn conclave which ensued between the cook, the cellarer, and the carver, followed by the cheery scene as the smoking haunch, with its accompanying sauces, was borne shoulder



"INCIPIENDUM ALIQUANDO."

high into the refectory. "What shall he have who killed the deer?" went the old song, and, under the old laws of "Royal Venerie," not seldom the answer came stern and sharp to the slayer of a buck, within forbidden precincts; but in those days venison was highly appreciated, as furnishing the foundation from which many a dainty dish was concocted; even the jolly Friar Tuck had hidden away in his cell a fine cold venison pasty, which, together with a bottle of sound red wine, enabled himself and the "Black Knight" to say their orisons with hearty vigour through the long watches of the night. Hashed venison, if properly served, and there should be just the faintest suspicion of

lemon and celery with it, is a dainty dish; venison collops, grilled, slightly dusted with pepper and served piping hot, will revive the most jaded appetite at breakfast; but a great, big, roomy, well-lined venison pasty, allowed to get cold before ever it is desecrated by the knife, is a truly noble addition to the Christmas sideboard. Will you try it, Mr. Editor?—X. L.

#### A CORRECTION.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Will you permit me, in thanking you most warmly for your highly appreciative notice of "Memorials of a Warwickshire Parish," to point out an amusing slip into which you have fallen. I take it that eye and ear together played the reviewer a trick, to which we have all of us been victims, I daresay, at one time or another. In my book there is the following sentence with reference to the old family of "le Persones": "Possibly the last of the old stock here was a Parsons, who in a drunken fray shot his uncle, a Hildick, some thirty years ago, and immediately afterwards shot himself, and fell dead in the road before this uncle's cottage door." In your review this becomes: "About thirty years ago, possibly the last of them, a man called Par-ons, was put in the stocks for shooting his uncle." Forgive me for wishing to make this small correction. I would not have it supposed that thirty years ago uncle-shooting was a pastime in Lapworth Parish punishable by nothing worse than a seat in the stocks.—THE EDITOR OF "MEMORIALS OF A WARWICKSHIRE PARISH."

#### HATCHING OUT IN NOVEMBER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—On the 19th ult. a brood of seven young wild duck was hatched out here. I shall be glad to know if this is not an extraordinary occurrence. They probably did not survive long, though strong and lively at first, as I have not seen them since.—H. H. BAGNALL, Avishays, near Chard, Somerset.